DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 346 760 HE 021 063

AUTHOR	Marchese, Theodore J.; Lawrence, Jane Fiori
TITLE	The Search Committee Handbook: A Guide to Recruiting Administrators.
INSTITUTION	American Association for Higher Education, Washington, D.C.; Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association, New York, NY. College Retirement Equities Fund.
SPONS AGENCY	EXXON Education Foundation, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE	87
NOTE	62p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Publications, American Association for Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036 ($8.95 prepaid; 5 or more, $6.95; 25 or more, $5.95).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Characteristics; Administrator Education; *Administrator Qualifications; *Administrator Selection; *College Administration; Employment Interviews; Higher Education; Job Analysis; Occupational Information; *Recruitment; *Search Committees (Personnel)

ABSTRACT

This handbook for aiding search committees in recruiting college administrators consists of the following chapters: "The Vacancy"; "The Committee"; "The Job"; "The Search"; "The Screening"; "The Interviews"; and "The Appointment." This up-to-date handbook on selecting individuals for administrative responsibilities fills a real need. It is filled with solid information and guidance about alternatives based on real experience at a broad spectrum of institutions. It treats virtually all the questions in the search process. It will be updated periodically. Suggestions for further reading are also provided. (KM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED346760

The Search Committee HANDBOOK

A Guide to Recruiting Administrators

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE HANDBOOK
A Guide to Recruiting Administrators

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Theodore J. Marchese

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

By
Theodore J. Marchese

Assisted by
Jane Fiori Lawrence

Cosponsored by
American Association for Higher Education
TIAA-CREF

With support from the
Exxon Education Foundation

Published by
American Association for Higher Education

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HE 021 063

Copyright 1987, American Association for Higher Education, Washington, D.C. All rights reserved.

Additional copies are available for $8.95. Discounts are available for bulk orders. Write:
American Association
for Higher Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202)293-6440

Design by Minker Design
Typesetting by Washingtype, Inc.
Printing by Hagerstown Bookbinding and Printing Co., Inc.

CONTENTS

Foreword ii

Introduction iii

CHAPTER ONE
The Vacancy 1

CHAPTER TWO
The Committee 7

CHAPTER THREE
The Job 17

CHAPTER FOUR
The Search 23

CHAPTER FIVE
The Screening 31

CHAPTER SIX
The Interviews 37

CHAPTER SEVEN
The Appointment 49

Further Reading 53

Acknowledgements 55

Dear Colleague Letter 57

FOREWORD

This up-to-date *Handbook* on selecting individuals for administrative responsibilities fills a real need. Thousands of administrators are appointed each year, most often with the participation of a search committee. So often these committees flounder, and mistakes of real consequence are made; what has been missing is a comprehensive guidebook to assist them. Now we have one.

Presidents and senior officers of colleges and universities serve in an environment of increasing constraints and complexity. Yet they still retain the initiative and responsibility for the quality of staff appointments. For better appointments we need stronger processes of search — thus this volume, prepared for all who seek to improve that process.

This *Handbook* does not prescribe any one, right way to do a search. Instead, it is filled with solid information and guidance about alternatives based on real experience at a broad spectrum of institutions. It treats virtually all of the questions and possibilities in the search process. By applying this knowledge and experience, any institution should find it useful for all administrative searches below the presidential level. And it will be up-dated periodically, based upon the advice of those who have used this first edition.

The *Handbook* is a project of the American Association for Higher Education in cosponsorship with TIAA-CREF, with support from the Exxon Education Foundation. The project director and author of the Handbook is Theodore J. Marchese, Vice President of AAHE, assisted by Jane Fiori Lawrence. With the counsel of an Advisory Board and many correspondents, they have produced a most useful guide for those who take up the task of selecting college and university administrators.

Joseph F. Kauffman
Professor Emeritus
University of Wisconsin-Madison

INTRODUCTION

Three years ago the *AAHE Bulletin* ran a series of articles about administrative search. Those short pieces generated more reaction than anything we'd published before or since. Almost everybody, it seemed, had been on a search committee, or been a candidate before one, and had a story to tell or advice to proffer.

Callers most often asked what they could read on the topic, so we went to the ERIC system. What it showed was a sparse literature on search, mostly devoted to the selection of presidents (much of that not applicable to other searches, since presidential search has its own set of rules these days). For the vast majority of searches — those for administrative posts below the presidency, typically driven by a campus-based search committee — there was little advice to be found.

What the literature and common experience did show was a *need* for advice. The shoddy, uncertain procedures committees stumble into often lead to failed searches, as a perusal of want-ads in any *Chronicle* — with an alarming number of ads tagged "search reopened" — indicates. Of worse consequence, uncertain procedures lead too often to the wrong appointment. In one study, an investigator checked back a year later to ask committees and their selectees (32 academic deans) whether the right choice had been made; in fully half the cases the committee and dean both agreed that it hadn't. Not surprisingly, high rates of turnover result; a nationwide study of thousands of incumbents in 55 administrative positions found that within two years 39.3% of all appointees were gone from their posts.

Given this picture, AAHE trustees in 1985 approved a project to produce a handbook for campus-based search committees. We soon found an ally and project cosponsor in TIAA-CREF, and subsequently received a grant of $48,317 in support from the Exxon Education Foundation. An Advisory Board was formed to provide direction and oversight for the project.

At that Board's initial meeting, in October 1986 in Chicago, directions were set for the project. The resulting handbook would be authored by the project director and not be a committee statement. It would not be normative in the sense of merely describing current practice, but would rethink practice. It would not prescribe single ways of doing things but, acknowledging the diversity of campus traditions and need to rethink matters, provide alternatives as reason suggested.

Given, too, the paucity of literature bearing directly on the topic, the Advisory Board helped plan a variety of approaches to capture campus experience and opinion as a knowledge base for the *Handbook*. Through academic year 1986-87, the project examined closely the search literature that did exist, then turned to wider literatures in executive search, interviewing and personnel selection, then to search practices in related industries (such as in professional firms, government, and hospitals). A project explanation and "Call for Ideas" appeared in the December 1986 *AAHE Bulletin;* it brought dozens of letters, calls, campus documents, and leads to other resources. Several campus visits were made; a dozen executive recruiters were interviewed; we corresponded with two dozen search-committee chairs; Peggy Heim of TIAA-CREF surveyed seventeen institutions about costs of recent searches. Four one-day meetings of experienced practitioners were convened in San Diego, Tampa, Houston, and Chicago. A resulting draft of this *Handbook* was then reviewed by 18 readers, page by page, and was the subject of a second Advisory Board meeting, July 15, 1987, in Washington, D.C. (We acknowledge at the end of this *Handbook* the many people who helped us most.)

Many people contributed, but in the end this *Handbook* is a personal statement for which the authors assume full responsibility. Doubtless we make errors, overlook points, or underestimate difficulties; our own view is that search processes are at many points problematic and subject to circumstance. Our objective has been to provide a fund of ideas and alternative paths to spur your own creativity. We hope you'll share your experience with us for the production of a wiser next edition (see our invitation to comment at the end).

In terms of audience, this entire *Handbook* should be of interest to students of search. More specifically, chapters one, two, and seven speak to the responsibilities of the president and appointing officer; chapters two through six are written primarily for the search committee's chair and members.

Best of luck with your search!

Theodore J. Marchese
Jane Fiori Lawrence

Washington, D.C.
October 21, 1987

Advisory Board

Michael Bisesi
Associate Dean, College of Business Administration
University of Houston

James M. Heffernan
Vice President for Student Affairs and Educational Services
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Peggy Heim
Senior Research Officer
TIAA-CREF

Joseph F. Kauffman *(Chairman)*
Professor Emeritus
Department of Educational Administration
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Thomas H. Maher
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Saint Francis College (PA)

Kathryn M. Moore
Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education
The Pennsylvania State University

Frank Ramirez
Director of Human Resources
Maricopa County Community College District

Sharon J. Rogers
University Librarian
The George Washington University

Donna Shavlik
Director, Office of Women in Higher Education
American Council on Education

About the Authors

Theodore J. Marchese is Vice President of the American Association for Higher Education and Executive Editor of *Change* magazine. His degrees are from Rutgers (B.A., English), Georgetown (J.D.), and Michigan (Ph.D.). He worked in the 1960s in Washington, D.C. for a United States senator, the Peace Corps, and the American Council on Education, then served fourteen years as an administrator and faculty member at Barat College — in the course of which he served on many search committees.

Jane Fiori Lawrence served as Director of Admissions (1975-83) and Dean of Student Services (1983-85) at John F. Kennedy University — in the course of which she also served on many search committees. She holds degrees in modern European history from Cal Poly (B.A.) and San Diego State (M.A.), and is currently completing a doctorate at Maryland.

About AAHE

AAHE is higher education's principal "citizen's organization." Its more than 6,000 members share two common convictions: that higher education can play a more central role in our national life; and that higher education can be more effective.

AAHE helps members translate these beliefs into action. Through the National Conference on Higher Education, *Change* magazine, *AAHE Bulletin*, and special projects such as this *Handbook*, AAHE members acquire both the "big picture" and the "practical tools" to increase their effectiveness in their own settings.

Order for Your Committee

Additional copies of this *Handbook* are available for $8.95 each. Order for your entire committee or college and receive significant discounts: 5 or more $6.95 each; 25 or more $5.95 each. Postage and handling is included in prices. Foreign postage is extra.

American Association for Higher Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036
(202)293-6440

The Vacancy

An Organizational Opportunity

A senior administrative vacancy presents a dual opportunity for a college or university: first to rethink a function — the roles and goals of a post, and character of person needed to make it work — then to make an appointment that helps achieve those goals.

So much is at stake in top-level administrative appointments. The right person set on the right course brings benefits for years; an ill-founded appointment can bring real harm. Even more so than in business or government, academic institutions rise or fall on their abilities to deploy human talent. In them, top leaders know that nothing they do is more important than to recruit, nurture, and advance the talents of the line managers and administrative staff who make the institution work.

To get it right — to initiate a search process with high probabilities of making an effective appointment — leaders start not with a search committee but with a process of thought. They do not let pass this opportunity to rethink a function; they know that "position analysis" is the essential undergird to a committee's subsequent search and an appointment that meets an institution's goals.

This first chapter, then, centers on how to rethink a vacant post. It begins with steps of position analysis, driven by the five questions that follow. After those questions, and a discussion of how they might be addressed, the chapter raises two predisposing matters of general policy: about the use of a committee and consultants for search, and about external search versus internal promotion.

Posing the Questions

What are the questions that drive a position analysis?

A first, too seldom asked, is: What would happen if this job were *not* filled or performed? Is it possible to transfer essential functions of the job to other offices? To subcontract them out? Or to promote someone to the job and reallocate some of that person's present work?

At higher administrative levels, the answer to all of these questions will often be "no." Even so, it is always important for institutional officers to step back and ask, How can these tasks be achieved in new ways?

For mid-level posts, a political reality is that no organizational unit will ever volunteer to give up a position or budget line. Senior officers might consider an incentive-challenge to the unit with the vacancy, raised by the question, "If all present resources were retained, what better uses for them could you devise than filling this slot?"

Question two: What larger developments in society, higher education, or within the position's special area prompt different ways of thinking about the post?

A good example here is offered by the convergence of the technologies of computing and telecommunications, which has prompted dozens of institutions recently to seek out a high-level "czar" to provide leadership for the costly choices that lie ahead. Similarly, fast-moving developments in information sciences have changed what many schools look for in a "head librarian."

Question three: Given the institution's strategic aims, what background and abilities might the college need in the post to meet its own agendas?

An institution under state mandate to do something in the name of assessment, for example, may want to fill an institutional research vacancy with a person who understands the analysis of student-learning outcomes. A college or university that plans a capital campaign may look for a chief development officer with strengths in campaign management. A university persuaded by the reports from the Holmes Group or Carnegie Forum may set out to find a new dean for its School of Education who accepts and will advance those recommendations.

In cases like these it is essential that the *institution* begin the process by defining priorities for the post to be filled.

Question four: Considering the composition of the administration as a whole, is there a special need in this search to bring forward minority or women candidates? Higher education, for example, will enroll increas-

Top leaders know nothing they do is more important than to recruit, nurture, and advance the talents of the line managers and administrative staff who make the institution work.

ing numbers of minorities in coming years; can we use this search to hire a person who reflects and/or can help prepare for that development?

Question five: What can we learn from our past five years' experience with this post? Has it been a continual trouble area? What are the sources of its problems? Has it been marked by high turnover? Why? What accounts for the present vacancy? Again, what does any of this tell us about a) the post (does it need redefinition?) or b) what we should look for in an appointment?

These are the questions, then, that a vacancy provides occasion to answer. They are not the "who" questions of the search committee but "what" questions for the leadership of the institution: What do we need from this post? What agenda do we advance with its filling?

These "what" questions are too important to leave to a search committee. Leadership's failure to answer them at the start, more than a missed opportunity, verges on the irresponsible. At the least, it can set in motion a search process doomed for disappointment.

Arriving at Answers

Responsibility for analyzing the newly vacant position rests primarily with the appointing officer to whom the office reports — a provost rethinks a vacant deanship, for example, or a dean of student affairs an opening for a head counselor. But a good rule is that at least one person higher in the line of authority should become involved, if nothing else as a guard against token or too-narrow review. For positions of campus-wide importance, the president and senior-level officers will want to take an active interest, along with the appointing officer, in defining broad directions for the post.

For major vacancies that raise wider questions of institutional direction — these days, a vacant School of Education deanship, for example — the chief executive and academic officers of the institution, especially if the matter hasn't arisen earlier for review, may devote a month or more to asking and answering questions before any aspect of "search" seems to begin (but note: this is the start of search). They may consult relevant national reports and their authors; invite opinion from within faculty and staff; confer with key parties within the unit of vacancy; do likewise with parties in the state served by the unit; read relevant annual reports and self-studies; and order up special analyses from the office of institutional research. Following all this, they might convene a day-long, off-campus retreat to sort options and set an agenda.

Not every vacancy, of course, will be so controversial or issue-laden that it requires so full a dose of introspection and planning. The significance of the appointment and character of issues it raises will govern the attention devoted to it by senior officers. Short of a full-blown review — which is necessary on most campuses for at least one position a year — here are three alternatives.

■ The appointing officer might accomplish the staff work on the vacancy and present a succinct, two-to-three-page plan for the post and its future to the president and his or her chief advisors. The role of these senior people becomes that of oversight, of raising questions and providing suggestions, after which responsibility for proceeding returns to the appointing officer.

■ At a higher level of administrative involvement, the president might designate a small team of senior officers to work with the appointing officer for a week or two to define broad directions for the post and its filling.

■ A consultant might usefully be engaged at this early point to help with the position analysis; a team of two or three might be brought in for an especially complex appointment (e.g., computer center head). Consultants can shorten time-lines, ask pointed "outsider" questions, and provide expert, more objective advice.

If a professional search firm has been engaged (see box), expect it very much to want to participate in your work of position analysis. Some firms with a management-consulting perspective refuse search assignments for which they haven't first had a chance to do this "up-front work." "Unless I can be sure the institution knows precisely and accurately what I should be searching for," one consultant told us, "it's wasting my time and its money."

In the course of this project, we've heard story after story of searches that failed. More often than not, the search entailed a committee hastily assembled, poorly charged and supported, which at last brought forward nominees only to have them brushed aside as "not what we're looking for." The missing ingredient in failed searches so often turns out to be that nobody took the time to think and communicate beforehand "what we're looking for." The situation begs for outrage over the many hours of lost professional time and the lost appointment.

A search committee is an instrument for identifying and recruiting talent. But it is the *institution*, not the committee, that makes that appointment and lives with the consequences. And so — one last time — it is the institution, its leaders, that must specify

beforehand what the post requires.

Search by Committee

A next point, one that senior administrators need to have determined *ahead* of time, is whether this vacancy raises the need for a search committee.

There is nothing preordained about the matter, whether by academic custom or common law. Administrative search committees became the norm in academe only in the past twenty or so years. Like the public posting of vacancies that came in with them, the committee as an instrumentality of search came about as the result of struggles to democratize and make more participative the governance of institutions. They succeeded earlier years of search done in contexts of paternalistic governance and reliance upon Old Boys' networks.

On paper, the use of broadly representative committees for search represents an advance. They reflect the more open, participatory ethos of the contemporary college. They reflect, too, a common-sense notion that in judging talent, several heads can be better than one. By bringing a wide spectrum of minds (faculty minds especially) to bear on administrative appointments, wiser, more broadly acceptable choices become possible. Indeed, a search committee legitimates an appointment as no other method can.

A good committee, as we'll see, becomes a bridge across factions, a consultant to institutional officers, and a champion for a new appointee. Undoubtedly, search committees have been a factor in breaking the hold of closed networks and opening doors for the advance of women and minorities within administrative ranks. And, not least, such committees provide an opportunity for service, and often a real education in institutional realities, for the people who serve on them.

The deficiencies of a committee approach must also be acknowledged. Their use raises to a new order the amount of precious professional time invested in search. A committee, other things being equal, will always take longer to accomplish the same tasks. In judging talent, a committee is open to the charge that its internal needs for agreement "level down" searches, that committee action seldom results in the unusual but brilliant appointment. And, for all the positive outcomes that might be realized through committee service, a poorly conceived search process can alienate and embitter its members and divide a campus community.

Taken together, the arguments convince us that in most situations a committee is very much worth it, if not essential: several of the benefits of a committee-driven process are otherwise unobtainable, while most of its "con's" are avoidable. Still, none of the benefits comes with a guarantee, and there are pitfalls galore. Our aim in this *Handbook* is to spur your thinking and increase the odds for a positive outcome.

A preference for use of search committees should not mean, however, a mindless application of the device to every vacancy no matter what. We came across one institution, for example, so enamored of participatory process that virtually any vacancy evoked a campus-wide committee, including one for a purchasing agent in the business office. The tremendous cost in time raised by the search committee process alone should caution its selective use.

Based upon discussions with people from a wide spectrum of institutions, a good rule emerges: the full search-committee process should be evoked only for positions of campus-wide significance, for line positions and not staff, and for which there exist a variety of constituent interests that require voice in the filling of the position.

Under this rule, almost any vice presidency or deanship would require a search committee; so would a division chair (because of the interest of divisional faculty in the appointment); but an assistant-to-the-president or assistant-dean search, in the absence of line responsibilities, would not be committee-driven (the "constituents" of these positions, their focus of accountability, are chiefly the president and dean, not the wider college).

Alternatives

The advantages of the search-committee process are marked enough

"Any job is a solution to a problem"

An *Esquire* profile of John Isaacson, a Boston-based headhunter for public agencies, tells this story. When the New York Port Authority looked for a new head of its three troubled airports (Kennedy, LaGuardia, and Newark), Isaacson first studied the airports themselves. He saw that they were run by aviation buffs who catered to the big airlines; his insight was to see that airport managers' "main job was to move people and baggage between the gate and the street. They were really in the ground transportation business." With that insight, Isaacson focused his search and found a person who understood aviation and people moving, and who proved successful in revitalizing these airports. Says Isaacson:

> The most overrated part of headhunting is the search. It is not hard to come up with lots of names for a job. The trick is to figure out what the job requires. Any job is a solution to a problem, but most people who hire don't stop to think what the problem is. They just look for someone who has the same credentials as the last person who had the job, when in fact the job has changed in the meantime. In most cases the real solution is to change the problem. (*Esquire*, December 1985, page 358)

These are not the "who" questions of the search committee but "what" questions for the leadership of the institution.

for many institutions to use trimmed-down versions of it for within-unit vacancies. For a counselor position on the student-affairs staff, for example, one hardly need invoke a campus-wide committee, presidential introspection, or elaborate interviews. At St. Louis University, we observed a team of three student-affairs professionals carry off just such a trimmed down search with dispatch. At a Tennessee community college, a dean and two faculty members formed a "work group" to find a new director of a media resources center. Within the library at The George Washington University, "interviewing panels" help at the final stages of search for key staff positions. Most institutions, too, in hiring academic affairs staff, find ways to elicit faculty advice prior to an appointment.

A full search-committee process can take three to five months to unfold. What should be done when the calendar doesn't allow such time, when a vacancy arises in June that must be filled by August? The universal advice is, appoint an acting or interim head of the office, commence a search the next fall; rush things and mistakes are made.

What if the vacancy arises in, say, April? And there is no person who can be appointed "acting?" And the post *must* be filled soon? In these conditions, when the time for search and appointment is critically short, institutions have tried short-cut modifications of the process. Two we've seen are:

■ The appointing officer, upon completion of the position analysis, names a small committee to oversee his or her work of search, recruits a pool, chooses the finalists, and uses the committee only for intensive interviewing and reference checking at the end (an "advise and consent" model).

■ Another "emergency" step entails the appointing officer and committee combining roles to do the position analysis and post the vacancy; they then get out on the networks to locate individual candidates, talk to good ones as they emerge, then hire the first who looks capable of the job and is willing to take it (a "hunt with a rifle, not a shotgun" model).

Both of these procedures are high-risk: they cut corners and raise chances for a costly mistake. They lose for you many of the potential benefits of the fuller process and can endanger the legitimacy of an appointment. And they can be used to frustrate affirmative-action goals (to realize them, too). They may in fact be flatly forbidden by applicable regulations, state law, a collective-bargaining agreement, or by institutional policy.

Experienced hands at search conclude what's been said in this section with a maxim: improvisation invites conflict. Every institution should be clear in advance (in writing) about which vacancies will invoke a search-committee process, and about what variances in that process become permissible in stated circumstances.

Inside, Outside

There is a final matter for thought raised by a vacancy that institutional leaders can profitably ponder at this point. It comes from the fact that recruitment of talent from outside the institution can be costly in time and money, risky as to the result, and can endanger morale.

In the best-run corporations and professional firms, external recruitment is done only under extraordinary circumstances. The rule is, hire carefully at the entry level, nurture the people you have, monitor performance and alter the job if necessary, then promote from within.

In too many colleges, by contrast, the rule seems to be, use 'em and lose 'em. "Search and destroy" is how David Riesman characterizes our employment of administrators.

A question for institutional officers to ask themselves is this: What are we doing to keep the good people we have? Do we keep them engaged, creative, healthy, and productive in the posts they fill? We visited one campus that twice in three years had spent $25,000 to fill a senior vacancy, but wouldn't spend $8,000 for a part-time assistant for the new person or $1,600 for a word processor or $500 for her to go to a conference.

The care and feeding of administrators is a topic beyond the scope of this *Handbook.* But any institution that routinely has three or four major external searches a year, or that has had three directors of a given office over the past five, has questions to ask of itself. Your best candidates will want to hear your answers.

A related question is this: What leads us so often to think we need an *external* search? So often the reason entails sustained inattention to the growth and advancement of the people you already have.

A striking fact about Harvard, Michigan, Williams, and Stanford is the extent to which they bring faculty members and staff along over time and promote from within; the loyalty and talented leadership these institutions reap in return is no small part of their success. Nor is it simply a question of money; at a notably successful, multi-campus community college we visited in Michigan (Macomb), the greatest care is taken in the appointment and professional development of assistant and associate level staff; deanships are filled from within that staff. Several liberal arts and state colleges have come to our attention that systematically identify future academic leaders within the faculty, then get them an ACE fellowship, for example, or fund their way to AAHE conferences, arrange an internship under a talented mentor, and otherwise provide for their readi-

ness for administrative leadership. Within denominational-college networks, too, one finds programs to identify and develop talent, so that a good pool of apt candidates stands ready at the start of searches.

All these examples speak to a single point: in the long run, it's more effective and less expensive to grow your own. A pattern of continual external searches may be a sign of short-horizon management.

Beyond factors of cost, morale, and risk in an external appointment, there is still another reason peculiar to higher education for the nurture of internal talent: academic change takes time and continuity of leadership to effect. The real problem with an outsider coming into a position is that he or she takes a year to learn the

Using Search Firms and Consultants

As recently as fifteen years ago, it was almost unheard of for an executive recruiter to participate in a search in higher education. By the 1980s, however, it had become common for firms or consultants to be used in presidential search.

In preparing this Handbook, we observed the increasing use of firms and consultants in the recruitment of senior-level positions below the presidency. Typically the posts at stake were those of a chief development or business officer, computer "czar", or the dean of a professional school — positions where qualified candidates can be found outside the academy. We also found, however, consultants hired to locate administrators in traditional academic areas (such as arts and sciences dean) and in one instance a firm that was recruiting faculty.

Why do colleges and universities turn to professional recruiters? The most often given reason is a desire to identify and recruit candidates that the institution would be unable to attract on its own; a good executive recruiter can ferret out qualified individuals who are not in the job market and who have to be encouraged to become interested in the position and institution. We also came across administrators who engaged a firm because they wished to keep a search confidential, or to avoid the strictures of a state "sunshine law." In other cases, the political climate on a campus was such that involving a neutral, external party, who could work with all relevant constituencies, was the best way to facilitate the process.

At their best, consultants and firms lend speed, expertise, confidentiality, and objectivity to a search process. The best firms, by campus report, are professional, effective, and worth the cost. There are also reports, notably about comprehensive firms with less experience in higher education, of insensitivity to collegiate decision-making that alienated campus constituencies.

If your institution weighs hiring professional help, a number of options are available. You can select an individual consultant; contact a professional association to see if it can provide assistance; seek out a nonprofit organization that works in search; hire a for-profit firm that focuses exclusively on higher education search; or choose a multipurpose consulting or executive recruitment firm that does a portion of its business in higher education.

We recommend that you evaluate *several* consultants or firms before choosing. Discuss with each your organizational needs and the position involved; learn in turn from them their specific experience with like searches, the services and approach they provide, their charges and timelines, and obtain references from similar searches or institutions you can contact. Often firms send a team to make a presentation; you want to know, before you sign a contract, exactly *who* will be seeking and evaluating candidates on your behalf.

After comparing proposals, interviewing the recruiters who will actually work on your search, and checking the references of these people, you are ready to choose. Carefully review with the recruiter you select the aspects of the process he or she will be involved in; make sure you'll be consulted and receive written reports at appropriate intervals throughout the search.

What about costs? Our inquiries indicate that they vary tremendously depending on the type of consultant or firm hired, and range of services contracted for. A large, national firm may charge one-third of the position's first year's salary and benefits, plus expenses (which add up). Nonprofit firms and individual consultants generally charge less. Some firms offer to perform services on a contingency basis; we can't recommend that option, since it can lead later to pressure to appoint the first qualified candidate turned up by the firm.

In thinking about costs it can be useful to remember the myriad of expenses, many of them buried in indirect and overhead accounts, that are part of a long committee process. If you have to find just the right person for a hard-to-fill position, it may be cost-effective indeed to use a professional recruiter.

Names of search firms are easy to acquire — there are over 2,500 of them in the U.S. — and are listed in the *Directory of Executive Recruiters* published annually by Consultants News, Fitzwilliam, NH. The tougher task is selecting the right person or firm for your institutional situation. Before engaging professional help, we recommend that you read, *Aiming High on a Small Budget: Executive Searches & the Nonprofit Sector*, listed in Further Reading.

institution, then (for whatever reason, but all too frequently) is gone by the third. An able insider, by contrast, who already knows the ropes and has a longer-term commitment to the institution, can often move ahead with an agenda from the start.

The bias here, obviously, is toward support and development of your own people. Certainly there will be situations where there isn't the talent available at home and where the institution has to look outside for the expertise, leadership, or fresh perspective it needs. Our message: don't overlook your own people, think about what a need for external search may signify, plan ahead so that you'll do less of such search.

Summing Up

A vacancy presents an opportunity for an institution to rethink a post and the character of person needed to make it work, now and over the next years. How a given search is conceived should be a function of the resulting position analysis, which in turn reflects a larger pattern of personnel planning for the institution, developed by the institution's senior executives. Prior to the appointment of a committee, too, a vacancy provides a chance to weigh institutional policies about search, and toward the professional development of staff and faculty talent already in place.

The Committee

Composition, Charge, and Ground Rules

This chapter assumes that the institution now has a good sense of what it wants from the search, and that it will appoint a committee to conduct it. It first addresses issues that confront the appointing officer as he or she gathers and charges a committee, then raises matters the officer and committee together need to weigh to get the search off to a good start.

How Large Should the Committee Be?

The social scientists (and common sense) make the rule here clear: almost all search committees should have at least five members but no more than nine. Researchers tell us that a committee with fewer than five members lacks critical mass; ten to fifteen, and each person's sense of belonging and contribution falls off sharply.

Most committees, in fact, should have just five or six members, a rule of parsimony that conserves professional time and permits a speedier process. For the broad run of position vacancies — a directorship of financial aid or of summer sessions, for example — a committee of five or six is more than adequate to provide for all necessary participation and expertise. A larger committee size — seven to nine persons — would be warranted for positions of sweeping responsibility, varied constituencies, and intense politics — a search for a provost, for example, or an athletic director.

A mistake of the inexperienced vice president is to say, "The vacant deanship has fourteen departments and units reporting to it, I'll add two outside faculty, plus a student .... let's see, I need a committee of seventeen people." This line of reasoning raises two errors. The first we've mentioned: seventeen is just too many people to work effectively as a group. The second error is to view a search committee as a constituent assembly, as so many "representatives of" rather than as a specially formed group *acting on behalf of the institution* — which is what a search committee, unlike a committee of the faculty senate, in fact is.

Committee Composition

A carefully constructed search committee, like a Boston political ticket, is a work of art.

Basically the appointing officer wants an able group of representative individuals who can work together to accomplish an institutional task. No single rule will always apply; the matter is ever situational. Here, though, to help think through matters of committee composition, are three general criteria, the first two of which are of greatest importance.

1. Personal qualities. The first thing an institution needs in all committee members is the quality that justifies a committee in the first place: good judgment. The best search-committee members will be savvy about people; they are discerners of talent who know and insist upon high-quality work. An institution needs committee members of personal integrity and independence of view, people devoted to the institution even if they are sometimes critical of it. Each should be willing and free enough to assume the committee assignment. As a group, the committee should have a status commensurate with the position at stake, a stature that warrants the respect and confidence of relevant constituencies (a search committee for a provost, then, should have at least two or more senior professors among its members). Avoid at all costs the appointment of known paranoids, gossips, and egotists.

2. The stakeholders. The second broad criterion is that committee composition reflect as best as possible the interest various constituencies have in the outcome. Faculty members, of course, are the chief stakeholders in academic appointments; they undoubtedly should comprise a majority of any committee charged with finding a provost, dean, or division chair, and sit on all other search committees, given the central importance of academic affairs to institutional life. For various posts, other administrators, students, and staff will have

Most committees should have just five or six members, a rule of parsimony that conserves professional time and permits a speedier process.

a stake that warrants committee membership.

A variant on this theme applies to searches for heads of larger units or offices that themselves house numbers of professionals or specialists (such as the library or a student-affairs office). Professionals in these offices have an obvious stake in the outcome, plus useful experience and contacts to bring to the search. Most appointing officers seek to include two or three such people, from within the unit of search, on the committee.

In searches for the dean of a major school or college within the university (law school, college of nursing), up to half of the committee might be drawn from faculty within that school. . . . but no more than half, our correspondents warn: a deanship is a *university* appointment, and there must be guard against parochial search.

3. Templates of interest. Using the two criteria above, the appointing officer assembles a "short list" of possible names for appointment to the committee.

At this point, the list can be laid against other templates: is it senior enough, as we asked above, to signal the importance of the appointment? Does it reflect diversity by sex and race? The interest of non-tenured faculty? Does it include a champion or two for affirmative action goals? And new faces, not just the same people tapped (unfairly) again? How appropriate is the list's inclusion (or not) of students? Of staff? Do we have in the mix at least two or three people with search-committee experience? How about people with access to special networks of talent that the search should tap for nominees? Is anyone in the group specially adept at personnel assessment or interviewing? Does it include someone you're confident can chair the committee?

Given this lengthy list of considerations, it's important for all campus parties to understand that not every possible interest can be reflected in a committee of five to nine people. Every interest can be weighed, but only a given, small number of real, available people can be appointed.

The word "available" points to a problem that arises frequently, namely the real difficulty an appointing officer may have in lining up the full complement of committee talent he or she sets out to get. The ablest people on campus are often already over-committed; searches never seem to come along when there's a lull. Here are suggestions, as regulations and custom permit, for broadening the pools from which committee members are drawn:

■ **Students.** Of course the institution appoints students to student-affairs searches. But consider a student as a sixth appointee to that search for a director of public relations or the summer school. The right student gives and learns a lot in these assignments; the wrong student, of course, can be passive, naive, or disruptive. The need here is quite the same as for any other member: if you know a good student with a contribution to make, make the appointment.

■ **Support Staff.** The next time you search for a registrar, name to the committee a departmental secretary of senior service (not from the registrar's office, of course). You'll pick up a shrewd, loyal, disinterested committee member — and send a much appreciated signal through the rest of the staff.

■ **Retirees.** Service on a search committee can be an ideal assignment for an emeritus/emerita professor or administrator living in town. He or she can lend a sense of balance and detached wisdom to a group, and may be the one person who either knows or has the time to learn a position's history. Again, a positive signal is sent to an important group.

■ **Community Figures.** Consider asking to serve, on that search for an Ed-school dean, an admired superintendent or "teacher of the year" — and build into your committee an antidote to unreality. The director of nursing at your metropolitan hospital, the head of the state performing arts society, or a just-retired corporate president can each bring to a given committee unique doses of insight. (One caution applies to such "external" committee members: they often know less about the unwritten rules and academic folkways, and may need appropriate coaching prior to appointment.)

Up to this point we've been discussing the *who* of search-committee composition; a few matters now need to be said about *how* those appointments are realized.

Appointing the Committee

For an appointing officer, the place to start in committee-building is with the chair. No other person will play as significant a role in the process: the chair sets the tone and pace of committee work, speaks for it on campus and before candidates, and is responsible for delivering final recommendations. A big mistake is to cobble together a committee and leave *it* to choose a chair — a task that nobody then wants (it wasn't part of their acceptance, for one), and that someone, for better or ill, finally gets dragooned into.

The chair *must* be someone the appointing officer has trust in. The chair's work commitment necessarily will be two or three times that of other committee members. Thus the chair must be the choice of the appointing officer, and have provision made in advance for freed-up time.

The qualities one wants in the search-committee chair are those sought for all committee members (judgment, etc.), plus a few special qualities: good communication skills, abilities to motivate and keep a group on track, dispatch with paperwork, skill in conflict situations, and gifts in institutional advocacy. The chair also must be senior and independent-enough a figure to command respect for the committee (and not be perceived as the appointing officer's lackey).

Most campus parties instinctively know the importance of the chair's role and will welcome overtures from the appointing officer seeking names in nomination. On a given campus, the officer may want (confidentially) to run a name or two by the president's senior advisors, the faculty senate executive committee, and key figures within the office of the vacancy, before making a choice and offering the assignment.

That done, the appointing officer and chair-designate proceed together with formation of the committee. Again, depending on local custom, there may be faculty/staff/student nomination by self, department, or elected body; the officer and chair may themselves want directly to solicit or confirm the interest of key individuals, to assure that the eventual group displays best qualities of status, judgment, and representativeness. However it is assembled, a slate with alternatives is presented by the officer and chair to the president (or a vice president, for lower-level posts), who then chooses, announces, and the committee is formed.

Of course this scenario may vary from the way things are done on your campus. It's helpful to isolate its key principles, however, as a check on your own practice:

1. The chair, upon appropriate consultation, is appointed first.
2. The chair and appointing officer assume responsibility, again with appropriate consultation, for recruiting and forming the committee.
3. Constituent bodies within the college contribute nominations and oversight to the process, but do not appoint members or otherwise designate "representatives" to serve.
4. The resulting body, appointed by the president, consists of individuals chosen for their ability and their willingness to act on behalf of the institution.

Again, there are certainly other ways of approaching committee composition and appointment. In institutions with a strong tradition of faculty governance, for example, and where a dean's or provost's position is at stake, names may come forward by colleague election (though the appointment comes from the president). On another campus, unions may have a role in nominating people. Whatever the case, the aim here has been to posit a clearer set of lines between authoritarian acts taken without consultation and a simple filling up of the committee through disparate local acts. However accomplished, the goal is a search committee ready to meet tests of legitimacy and effectiveness.

Upon receipt of their letters of appointment (and a copy of this *Handbook!*), the committee is ready to begin.

Act one entails several steps of orientation and planning, which require that the committee spend a number of hours together. During these initial sessions, the committee will receive and discuss its charge; be oriented to institutional rules and legal requirements; assure itself about budgetary resources and administrative support; take a first pass at setting time-lines for itself; and confirm expectations for member conduct.

The Committee Charge

Close in time to the letter of appointment, and prior to their first meeting, members should expect to receive a formal, written "charge to the committee," a memorandum setting forth the institution's expectations for the position and the search committee's role in helping to fill it. Customarily such letters are prepared by the appointing officer and signed by the president. The charge itself need not be cast in stone; it is discussable by the committee and may be modified, after which it becomes the basic charter and set of ground rules for proceeding.

> The object is not to invent rules in advance for every imagined case.

Typically a search-committee charge covers the following essentials:

1. Most importantly, the character of the post to be filled, as the institution now views it, extending beyond a job description (which should be attached) to a description of short and longer-term needs/opportunities raised by the vacancy. (This is the work described in Chapter One.)
2. The tasks and role of the committee in the search, and of its chair.
3. Any institutional sense of scope or limits to the search (e.g., internal, local, statewide, national).
4. A preferred time by which the appointment should be made.
5. Essential characteristics the institution desires in the names brought forward (e.g., relating to affirmative action, national reputation, community college experience, etc.)
6. Instruction as to the form in which the committee's final recommendations are to be brought forward.
7. A sense of what steps (if any) the appointing officer desires to participate in or be consulted about.
8. If a search firm or consultants will be in the picture, their role in relation to the committee.
9. A description of the search-related financial and office resources available to the committee.
10. A reference to governmental and institutional regulations applicable to this search, including needs for record-keeping.
11. The roles of the committee, if

A carefully constructed search committee, like a Boston political ticket, is a work of art.

any, after it submits its recommendations.

At its initial meeting, with the appointing officer present, the committee should review thoroughly the charge. Now is the time to resolve ambiguities, ask for any changes deemed wise or necessary, and otherwise build a base of common understanding for work that will follow.

In the experience of many "failed" searches, the eventual sticking points turn out often to center on numbers 6 and 7 above, and especially on 6 (form of recommendations). These and all other items need to be gone over now with care, and the charge document modified if necessary.

As to number 6, the issue is, in what form shall the committee's recommendations be made, and what is the appointing officer's responsibility toward them? How many names shall be brought forward in final nomination? With what attached information, comment, or evaluation? Shall they be designated as "qualified" or "best qualified?" Are they to be rank-ordered? (This is *not* recommended; see Chapter Seven.) Are dissenting reports in order? Must a final list include women or minority candidates? Shall the committee's recommendations be considered binding or advisory? Under what circumstances can the appointing officer reject an entire slate? Or appoint a person who chose not to be a candidate before the committee (such as an "acting" administrator)? Or re-open a search if the final list fails to produce a desired candidate or acceptance? Will this committee assume a role in any re-opened search, or in a decision to appoint a given person on an interim basis?

As to number 7, does the appointing officer envision a role for himself or herself in nominating individuals for the applicant pool? Approving internal candidacies? In reference checking? Interviewing? In a review of the pool at certain stages? If so, now is the time to say so and reach a collective agreement.

Of course not every possibility can be foreseen, and the object is not to invent rules in advance for every imagined case. But there is need for a good set of understandings all around, so that the committee knows its role and what to expect in discharging it.

Regulations and Requirements

Next up for the new committee is the need to familiarize itself with applicable legal and procedural requirements for the conduct of its work. The appointing officer and chair should arrange in advance to have on hand copies of all relevant federal, state, and local statutes and guidelines, plus applicable institutional regulations and policy statements; and they should arrange briefings, as appropriate, by the institutions's legal, personnel, and affirmative-action officers.

Committee members are often stunned by the legal and regulatory requirements that surround their work. Indeed, at different points in the preparation of this *Handbook* the authors considered including in it a primer on applicable law; but the legal environment varies so by state and institutional type that we abandoned that idea (the law and lore of sunshine laws alone could take up ten pages here . . . . and *they* don't apply in a majority of institutions).

Our short advice is this: don't be buffaloed. Common sense most often does apply; learn what you *can* do, not just the "don'ts;" be as open, consistent, and fair as possible; keep good records; and in most cases you'll be fine.

It's amazing how otherwise bright committee members can be cowed by pseudo-legal injunctions (e.g., "It is illegal to videotape an interview!"). Challenge any such claim — legal, regulatory, or from guidelines — that flies in the face of common sense. Minnesota's Pat Mullen provides another general rule: if a legal, regulatory, or guideline mistake is made, don't ignore it, fix it. If, for example, the alum on your committee poses to a candidate an illegal pre-employment question, the chair should tactfully, but firmly, step in and correct the mistake.

A sensible step for a committee might be to ask a member or two (one of whom might be the chair) to immerse themselves in the applicable requirements so as to serve as the resident amateur-expert on them for the committee, thereby to flag the committee's attention to requirements at key steps or to know when further advice is needed. Such a step can help a committee avoid both thoughtless error and undue dependence on third-party experts.

Two usual briefings at the committee orientation deserve comment.

First is the visit with the institution's affirmative-action officer. Since affirmative action is a national endeavor applicable to virtually all educational institutions (see box), this *Handbook* will raise points in its name along the way. Even so, state or institutional plans often go beyond federal requirements, and special court injunctions may apply, so the officer's local report should always take precedence. As you'll learn, affirmative action is more than a stipulation here or there; it is a combination of goals, expectancies, and sensitivities that should pervade all of your thinking about the attraction and selection of talent. You also may find, as many committees have, that your affirmative-action officer is the single best informed person on campus about the search process, and can be a great asset to your work.

Next is the visit with the institution's chief personnel officer. Here again the situation you'll find varies by institution. At a New York liberal arts college, we heard, a clerk performs this function; at the Maricopa

community colleges in Phoenix, an able staff headed by a "vice chancellor for human resources development" stands at the ready with sophisticated assistance. In between these extremes, you can hope for a useful ally: the smartest person on campus about committee lore, reading resumes, checking references, and the details of an appointment. Learn from him or her about applicable personnel policies of the institution, and about other ways that person or office can be of help.

Keeping Records

The committee will need to keep minutes of its proceedings, so should now designate a recorder. In most situations these minutes needn't be lengthy or overly formal; the point is to keep track of the rules you make and your decisions.

A failure to keep minutes invites trouble and conflict. What did we agree to last month about that application deadline? Whose job was it to notify Jones? Did we eliminate Smith or not? Minutes are useful for history and lawyers, too, but first as an aspect of good committee process. It's worth starting each meeting with a check that minutes from the last are correct in recording committee decisions.

Minnesota's Pat Mullen raises another reason for keeping records: they help you maintain consistent procedures. In discrimination suits arising from search processes, courts tend to look for bias tainting a search. Since the bias often isn't blatant, a court may ask, Did you follow your own rules, or set them and ignore them? Did you establish an application deadline, for example, then ignore it in the case of a white male? Or change the job description after you began screening?

It isn't so much that a "yes" to any of these questions makes a flawed search, or that a flawed search adds up to discrimination, but that it is all fertile ground. It makes it tougher for a judge to credit a claim that your finalist was "best on the merits." So again, keep track of your decisions, as preventative law, but primarily as a check on sloppy practice.

Budget

Next the committee's orientation needs to cover the resources available for its work.

Any search incurs predictable costs: for candidate travel and hosting, for example, and for clerical help, advertisements, postage, and telephone. Some searches raise hard-to-predict costs: out-of-town travel by committee members to meet a candidate at an airport, for example, or to engage a consultant. Whatever, the committee needs to know up front what money it has to work with. All committee members need to understand the rules for its expenditure and for their own expense reimbursement.

Not infrequently, committees confront a situation in which there is no clear budget or only a quite small budgeted amount. In the latter case, a substantive issue may be at stake: when an administration charges a committee to find and land "one of the five best librarians in the nation," and puts up $800 for the task, something is awry that needs prompt address.

Just as often, though, the committee confronts no clear guidance about what it can spend: "We have some money in the president's discretionary fund, I have a kitty for emergencies, maybe we could tap the university foundation for help. . . .", and so on. Many institutions don't budget at all for searches, we're told, because "our president doesn't like to predict bad news in the budget" or because "we can't know in advance how

About Experts: A Note

In the preceding, we've been quite positive about the help you can receive from experts — from lawyers, affirmative-action officers, and personnel heads. Your attitude, going in, will be equally positive.

In the course of this project, however, too many stories have come to us from committee members not to raise a warning: beware. . . the agendas of experts are not always the same as your own.

From a private university, we hear of outside counsel seemingly more interested in puffing up his role (and billable hours) than in the substantive work of the committee; from another, of a super-cautious lawyer who'd not let even the simplest step go forward without his formal opinion; from a public university, of a state-supplied attorney who was basically hostile to the requirements for academic search, and especially to needs for confidential communication. Of course these individual reports do not represent the whole; however infrequent, they remain a reality.

Few correspondents have registered complaints about affirmative-action officers. Understand that many of these officers have deep commitments to affirmative action as a cause. A few have been known to push the claims of the regulations they oversee (which can be murky around the edges) to whatever limit they can to achieve their desired end.

As to personnel offices, we've come across a few that seem to have run amok with intrusive procedures. At a Maryland community college, for example, the personnel office insists that no person be considered for *any* post (even the presidency) who hasn't first completed that office's six-page, densely printed application, replete with tiny blanks for "mother's maiden name," "high school honors," and a full line each for "speeches" and "reason for applying." At another Maryland college, the personnel officer insisted that all correspondence with all candidates go out over her name ("so you people won't get us sued"), an insistence that made a negative impression on candidates.

> The first thing an institution needs in all committee members is the quality that justifies a committee in the first place: good judgment.

many searches we'll have" (despite having had three a year for the last five years) or because "the state (or district) won't allow it." Whatever the reason, a good search requires adequate funding, and it is the college's responsibility — and the appointing officer's problem, not the committee's — to find it.

How much funding is required? A recent survey of seventeen varied institutions by Dr. Peggy Heim of TIAA-CREF yields the following information. The data below apply to a single search at the deanship or vice-presidential level (1985-1986):

	Average	Range
Advertising	$1,000	$420—2,680
Travel & hosting	3,570	400—14,200
Office expenses	380	100—1,890

In addition to the above expenses, two of the surveyed institutions employed consultants at costs of $3,000 and $6,000 respectively; one university engaged a search firm at $35,000, and several institutions recorded other expenses, primarily salaries for part-time staff. Combining all these costs, one institution spent over $40,000 to fill its position (that of provost), and several spent over $10,000 for their search. More commonly, however, the reported out-of-pocket costs were in the range of $1,800 to $6,000.

While on the subject of money, and with the appointing and personnel officers on hand, the committee should be briefed on the institution's budget parameters for the post to be filled. What is the salary range? The fringe benefits? Do we help with relocation expenses, spousal employment, housing and school arrangements, and the like? Committee members need to know these facts (often confidentially) not for the purpose of holding out offers to people (as they never should; it's not their role); but they will be attempting to recruit candidates and need to know at least the general budget circumstances of the appointment.

Staff Assistance

Staff support is vital to the committee's work. An ideal arrangement would be for part of the time of a discreet, able secretary (preferably not from the office of the vacancy) who would accomplish committee tasks from a small, separate office with its own set of keys and lockable cabinets. The office, too, should have a private-line telephone for confidential calling (and easier tracking of costs). It would have a microcomputer for the secretary and committee members' use, outfitted with software for word processing, list or file management, plus mail-merge capabilities for "personal" letters. Some committees, take the step of printing stationery (listing member names and departments) and open a separate box for receipt of mail.

Returning to staffing issues, an item to recall at this point is the time demands on the chair. Especially if this is a senior-level search that will demand active recruitment and internal political attentions, then the chair will need released time, perhaps from a term's course — which may raise an additional direct cost, that for his or her replacement.

A variant on these arrangements is a practice we found at the University of Houston and at a few other large state universities (but that's applicable anywhere). These universities have designated an experienced, mid-level staff person, often situated in a president's office, to serve as aide-de-camp to every campus-wide search committee, with such service constituting a third to a half of that person's full-time work. For a committee, as appropriate, this person supervises office work, arranges necessary briefings, handles candidate hosting, and, more substantively, contributes to tasks of pool building, resume review, reference and credential checks, and interviewing. At their best, such persons can be a superb complement to a search committee's work; they manifest their institutions's commitment to aggressive, professionally done search, and to the high standards of work it takes to realize top appointments.

The Committee Itself

Every committee needs time to find a sense of itself, to develop a personality, to build an ethos of individual contribution toward agreed-upon goals. Make time for committee members to get to know one another better; share the contributions each person hopes to make; swap war stories from earlier searches (they can be funny, and instructive).

A useful conversation during a first dinner together might be for each committee member to state his or her personal hopes for the appointment. At such a meeting, the search being for a dean of arts and sciences, for example, one expects to hear calls for "a dean who finally understands research . . . . the arts . . . . students . . . . the critical importance of computing . . . . has a science background . . . . will stand up for faculty . . . . keeps an open door . . . .", and so on. It may be too strong to label these "special pleadings" or "hidden agendas," but the value of having them on the table early — so that each knows whence the other starts out, and so that each orientation, valid as it is, comes to be tempered by the whole — cannot be overestimated.

Conflict within committees is a familiar story in search. In the category of "ground rules," each member must feel responsible for bringing immediately to the committee (or

More on Affirmative Action: A Letter

Dear Ted and Jane,

Frequently I'm asked to provide a checklist or set of rules that will ensure, if followed, that a search meets tests of affirmative action.

I resist these requests, because good affirmative action is a process, inseparable from good personnel practice, that starts before and extends after the committee's searching is done. Ninety percent of what goes wrong with a search, and damages affirmative action, starts not with violations of equal-opportunity law but with a flouting of good, intelligent personnel practice.

There are procedural steps that have come to be an expectation for equal opportunity — advertising a vacancy, not asking non-job-related questions, and so on — but these are in fact just aspects of good practice. Most committees know and follow these steps comfortably, and are not sued on their basis, any more than they are sued by aspirants who are merely disappointed.

Committees and their institution do get sued by applicants who believe they were treated unfairly or arbitrarily within a shabby process. Sometimes such suits are brought by women or persons of color, who just can't believe how badly they were treated and think they were singled out. . . . when the truth is that all the candidates had been subjected to the same, shabby treatment. Their "affirmative-action suit" really stemmed from a poor overall process.

Federal requirements for affirmative action, emanating from Executive Order 11246, oblige a collegiate search committee to make a "good faith effort" to develop a talent pool reflecting the availability of minorities and women in the labor force. Often a committee will be aided by prior work of the institution's affirmative-action professional, analyzing the employee work force by race and sex, and setting targets or goals for hiring persons to overcome historical imbalances.

If you are not required and do not have such reports, use a simple test. Look around campus; look around the committee room. If there are no or few women or minorities in sight, assume that the Executive Order would require a "good faith effort".

The "how" of recruiting an affirmative pool is covered in part in this *Handbook*. The test I'd apply is this: that a committee's effort be at least as rigorous as that expended on getting other valued people into the institution, such as the best students. I've had committee members look me in the eye and say, "I don't know how to find qualified minorities," even as they begin looking for talented graduate students among the ranks of college juniors. Meeting formal paper requirements, then, is not enough; all the aggressive recruitment techniques you'd use to find a head football coach recommend themselves for affirmative action candidates. Only the networks you'd go to will be different.

When the Department of Labor reviews an institution for affirmative action, the issue usually isn't whether this or that particular step has been followed. It is whether a full, good-faith effort has been made and whether those efforts succeeded. The essence of affirmative action is that there be *results*. Are persons of color and women in fact being hired? Promoted? Tenured? That is the test.

The test of "results" also applies to another difficult issue in search, that of needs for flexibility versus needs for rules and consistency. I think this *Handbook* insists on consistency where it's really necessary (e.g., using the same standards of judgment throughout the search), but its general tilt against firm rules and for flexibility can lead to problems. Take the matter of not using firm application deadlines, for example. I feel ambivalent about them myself. I appreciate the difficulties of forcing candidates to reveal themselves too soon (especially minority and female prospects, who often have to prove their loyalty more than others). But I also know how hard it is for a committee to answer, "He didn't even apply for this job!" — the double-standard issue. The point should be made that if the flexibility always results in favoring majority candidates, the institution may be in danger of losing it. No matter how reasonable flexibility seems in particular instances, if year after year it works against female and minority candidates, something is wrong.

Let me conclude by saying that committees should feel secure that if they take the good advice offered in this *Handbook* they will very likely meet the letter, and the spirit, of affirmative action. If the hiring official follows through on this good work, the process and its result should be something an affirmative-action office would be proud to endorse.

Sincerely,

Pat Mullen

Patricia A. Mullen
Director and University Equal Opportunity Officer
University of Minnesota

Our short advice is this: don't be buffaloed.

chair) any doubts about fairness or correct procedure. The committee in turn must agree to engage concerns as they arise, no matter how "picky," and resolve them. It is far better to deal with doubt and conflict as it arises than to deal later with an estranged member who goes public with a grievance.

Part of the commitment individuals make in committee service is that of giving it a priority in time. An early step for a committee, then, is to compare calendars and set agreed-upon meeting dates and times — every Tuesday from 4:00 to 6:00 pm for the first eight weeks, for example, plus Friday noon to 2:00 pm, then additional times held for weeks 9-15. The committee will want to set rules for itself about attendance and their enforcement by the chair (e.g., three absences and your resignation is accepted), in part to guard against the happenstance that a member will cut most meetings and interviews, then plump hard (and disruptively) at the end for a favorite candidate.

The committee should set a brisk schedule for its work, then hold itself as best as possible to it. (Long, drawn-out searches, experience tells, wear out committees and lose good candidates at the end.) Any member who realizes he or she cannot meet the agreed-upon schedule should leave the committee now.

Confidentiality

Matters of confidentiality prove troublesome to virtually every search committee. The ethic of academe urges free and open communication, the sharing and testing with others of ideas and information. With most other campus committees, member reports back to colleagues are an expectation; committee doings, indeed, become a staple for campus gossip.

It is against strong winds, then, that search committees must insist upon totally different norms: no open sharing, no private reporting, no snippet, even, of gossip. The overriding needs are to protect the integrity and candor of member-to-member discussion, and to protect the identity of people who have allowed you to consider their names in candidacy.

Why is all this so important? Let's go to our file of horror stories:

■ At a prestigious New England college, a committee member discreetly raised for discussion a widely shared doubt about an internal candidate; another member leaked that "negative statement" back to the candidate, with the result that the member's candor reaped in return the bitter, enduring enmity of a circle of faculty colleagues (some of whom are his neighbors).

■ At a Midwestern state university, a committee member at a party teased a gathering with clues about how to identify the search finalists. A reporter on hand took the challenge, and (using travel records) a day later correctly identified seven of the eight finalists in the paper. By the following day, four of the eight had withdrawn from the search (angrily!), including three of the top candidates.

■ At a Southern women's college, a committee member mentioned to a close colleague that "the dean at Siwash may be interested." The colleague happened to mention it to someone down the hall, who mentioned it on the phone to a friend at Siwash, who mentioned it to that college's president, who brought the dean in on the carpet and fired her on the spot.

■ At an urban, private university searching for a provost, a member's selective leak about a "rigged" finalist pool (it wasn't, but it didn't include her crony) led cause groups on campus to hold rallies, gather petitions, and file a lawsuit — effectively stopping the search and scrapping five months of committee work (and leaving that university without a chief academic officer for another year).

These stories and dozens of others from search-committee lore underscore two points:

First, an essence of good recruitment and personnel practice is that candidates know the extent to which the privacy of their application will be protected. In sunshine-law states, people know (because they're told) that their candidacy will be a matter of public record. In all other instances, candidates will assume (and you will be assuring them so) that their candidacy will be held in confidence. This is a vow that must be kept. Break it and you undermine a candidate's standing at home, and you will see your pool start to fall apart.

Second, members owe a duty to one another to protect absolutely the freest expression of opinion in committee deliberation. Especially in discussing individual candidates, every remark must be taken as privileged.

In sum: in accepting committee membership, each member assumes a responsibility not to mention any candidate's name or status, or the content of any committee conversation, to any non-committee person within or outside the institution. Members serve on behalf of the institution, not as constituent representatives, and therefore do not engage in private reporting back in their home office or department. All public representations about the search are made by the chair; these will concern process, never people by name. By committee stipulation, the chair should be empowered to accept the resignation of any committee member who breaches these agreements.

Communications

To forestall political problems, encourage positive regard for its process, and to build a climate of acceptance for the eventual appointment, the

committee needs to think now about what, how, and to whom it will communicate during the search. The committee as a whole needs to weigh the matter and set a plan, which is then discharged by the chair.

The highest level of regular reporting is to the appointing officer, the final constituent for the committee's work. With his or her concurrence, certain other senior officers may receive periodic briefings.

For faculty, students, or staff at large, the committee may want to share explanations and updates in campus-wide periodicals, schedule an open meeting or forum, or have the chair appear for questions at a Senate or other meetings. Who is most concerned about this appointment? Keep those people informed about how things are going. Make sure they understand early, for example, about your needs for confidentiality in the process.

It is also important to have a sense of what to communicate at different stages to applicants. The object as time passes is to convey increasingly specific information about the institution, the post, and the search, and thereby heighten candidate commitment to the committee's process. Christine Young of AGB's Presidential Search Consultation Service writes,

> A task for the committee here is to go over a list of documents to be to be sent to potential and actual candidates to keep their interest over the life of the search. These are timed to correspond to decision points and proceed from the most public documents (catalog, prospectus) to those only finalists need to see (certain financial data, a list of committee members, etc.). This is public relations at its best: giving people the information they need when they need it — and showing that the search (and the institution) is well-managed.

Summing Up

An effective search process begins with a good set of understandings, developed by institutional leaders, about the vacant position and its requirements; these were the subject of Chapter One.

In this second chapter, we've looked at a next, more immediate set of understandings, having to do with committee size, composition, role, and leadership — matters, let it be added, ever subject to campus custom and politics. Once it's formed, every search committee must address its own needs — for expertise, funding, staff assistance, member time, and confidentiality — *before* any particular of the search itself is addressed.

Indeed, there remains still one more committee task prior to going public with a search; we turn to it now with Chapter Three.

The Job

Identifying Preferred Qualifications

The search committee now has its charge, the institution's prescriptions for the vacancy, and a good sense of itself and how it will do its work. It is now ready for its initial substantive task of search: to figure out as precisely as possible what it will search for.

The need to pursue the matter will usually be apparent from a closer inspection of the charge and job description. The charge, alas, will often have a certain vagueness to it in discussing the institution's expectations for the post, and will deal mostly with "macro"-level concerns; to proceed, the committee needs a sense of the post that is far more specific and concrete.

As for the job description, it may not have been re-done in years, and probably doesn't correspond too well with the charge. In any case, it typically deals with what must be done in the post, not with what's needed in a person to do it, the "who" question that is the committee's chief concern. Even so, a job description is important (candidates will want to see it); a committee member or two might work with the appointing officer toward any necessary repairs or update.

Intelligent search begins with a solid sense of what you're looking for. A committee arrives at that sense through a combination of legwork, thought, and collective judgment, in consultation with the appointing officer, the result of which will be a plain-spoken, page-length statement of "preferred qualifications." That preferred-qualifications statement becomes the committee's touchstone for all succeeding acts of recruitment, interview, and selection.

Putting together a list of preferred qualifications entails three steps of analysis: of the job, of what it takes to do that job, and of who will succeed in it.

What is the Job?

The starting point here is certainly the committee's charge and the job description, though both usually need to be pushed to a deeper level. What are the outstanding needs in the office? What does the institution want this office to be like five years from now? With this appointment, are we primarily trying to overcome today's problems or move to new agendas? (Both of these objectives are valid, but each points in a different direction for candidates.) Is it realistic to expect in the same person abilities to "clean house in a tough-minded way" and to provide "visionary leadership?" What does this job need most, then?

At another level, it is most helpful for a committee — even as it keeps its eye on what it wants accomplished in the job — to be aware of the daily, unalterable tasks of the post. Inevitably there are calls to be answered, meetings to attend, students to be seen, forms to complete, and so on. to schedule time for an extended Some committee members may want visit with the office of vacancy, to ground themselves better in a sense of this work.

A best source for information about the diurnal work of the office is the departing incumbent (plus any predecessors who may be accessible). Oddly, committees seldom visit a departing officer. "Once I announced my resignation, it's as though I became unclean," one told us. Committees have been known, in fact, to list a departing dean's faults, then write down the opposite of each as what they'd look for (overlooking the dozen other things that dean did quietly but well). So do visit with the departing person; you'll learn a lot.

In fact, you'll want to do all the consultation possible at this early stage: with administrative subordinates, peers, and supervisors of the position; with the president and key vice presidents; with certain faculty, students, and other constituents of the post; and, of course, with staff within the office at stake: what do these parties think is needed and should you be looking for? In the search for answers, individual committee members might schedule short appointments with more important figures, call others by phone, or request opinion by memo or electronic mail, schedule an open hearing, and so on.

The point is that the committee collects wider opinion of real value to its work. It flushes out early the hidden agendas lurking in various quarters. And since people tend to trust committees that ask and listen, a crucial floor of credibility is laid for the committee's later work.

What does a committee do when

Intelligent search begins with a solid sense of what you're looking for.

it pokes into an office more deeply, only to find a mare's-nest of problems crying for resolution (and to which you'd never want to expose a good candidate)? Just such a situation confronted a search committee at San Francisco State recently, a committee appointed on the heels of a succession of short-term directors and a failed search. It decided to halt its process momentarily, arranged for two consultants, saw to it that certain issues came to be addressed by the president and provost, *then*, weeks later, commenced its search (which was successful).

Situations like this won't be covered in your charge, but they illustrate an adage: a search can't solve underlying problems; only the institution can. If the last three incumbents failed in the job, before you search again, prod institutional officers to rethink the job. At best a search can be *part* of a solution; it's seldom *the* solution. The California example illustrates, too, a premise of this section: start with the job, not with the person.

Who Could Succeed in It?

Once it has a concrete sense of the post's functions and agendas, the committee then asks, what qualities of person will it take to succeed in the position as we've defined it? In corporate executive search, the pro's start with the questions in the section above (they call it "task analysis"), then ask, "What knowledge, experience, abilities, and personal traits are necessary for a person to succeed in this job?" Lets take each of these four characteristics — knowledge, experience, abilities, and traits — and relate them to a collegiate search for administrative positions.

As to *knowledge*, two observations. First, many committee members, especially those with less contact with administrative work, underestimate the expertise required for today's posts, assuming (as may have been the case earlier) that any reasonably smart person can handle any administrative job. But yesterday's admissions director, gifted with a ready smile and firm handshake, has long since been replaced by marketing experts and enrollment managers armed with computer analyses . . . . yes, any bright person *could* learn that job, but the college can hardly afford a year or two of fumble and learning. Even a deanship of arts and sciences today raises a dozen details of special knowledge that makes prior relevant experience or some form of preparation all but essential.

The second point about knowledge is that the specific requirements for it vary sharply by situation and your own expectations for the task. In a small college with a one or two person office of financial aid, for example, the new director of that office simply *must* be expert in aid administration — there's no way the office can otherwise function. In a larger aid office, however, with a capable staff of underlying experts, the "knowledge" requirement for the director could be more general. Indeed, where the institution's plan is to evolve that office into something new ("Office of Financial Planning and Assistance"), the person sought might have quite a different background still, in financial planning instead of financial aid.

As to prior, relevant *experience*, a committee would be wise to look for and examine it ever so carefully during *later* stages of candidate review, but be wary about specifying in advance the what, where, or length of that experience. The reason is that you're not looking for experience *per se;* you're looking for the knowledge, abilities, and traits to perform your set of tasks. Experience provides a means for a person to learn and display those qualities (it's the "display" or results you'll later examine closely), but its location or length by itself has little probative value.

An adage and "old saw" apply. The former is, "Experience is the best teacher." True, but it isn't the only teacher, nor will it tell you what was *learned*. Committee members will soon enough come across candidates who reflect the old saw, "One year of experience, repeated five times."

Putting these two together, of course you want candidates with significant professional experience in their backgrounds; you can't afford a parvenu. In searching for a senior person to head a proposed capital campaign, then, it may be wise to state as a "preferred qualification" that the person had played a significant role in such a campaign before, but *un*wise to specify in advance the character or length of that role or even, perhaps, that the campaign have been in a college or university.

As to *abilities*, these should follow directly from your work of task analysis, and might usefully be of two types in collegiate search.

First, think in terms of specific administrative abilities necessary to the job as you've defined it. In a given post for which there is a heavy, essential paper flow, it may be highly important to find a person able to organize his or her own and other people's work. Some posts require high levels of writing ability; a few require public-speaking facility; another may require skills of quantitative analysis. Keep your list of preferred administrative skills short; remember, you're specifying skills essential to the person who *directs* an office, not to the office in general, and abilities germane to *administrative* performance, not to a faculty appointment or college presidency.

Then think in terms of what "leadership" abilities may be necessary to the post. Don't be thrown off by the word; we're not talking about charisma or anything ethereal. The post you're helping fill may beg for an assertive, tough-minded, decisive person; another may want a careful, even methodical person with tact and academic sensitivity; a given post may at one moment need a creative builder and at another a process-

oriented consolidator; various posts may require the patient even-handedness of a negotiator, the group-process skills of a facilitator, or the social skills of a lobbyist. Again, what are the abilities you want? Are there any you *don't* want?

For almost any administrative post, a basic, overarching leadership requirement is the ability to advance an agenda, to organize and inspire those reporting to them and/or whom they serve, so that things get accomplished. This ability to follow through, to describe a task and get the work done on time, is often called "production-mindedness."

Use of the word "mindedness" brings us to *personal traits* essential to the post as conceived. Under this heading there are basic, common-denominator characteristics, independent of the position, that you'll pay attention to later in interviews and reference checking but can omit from a starting "preferred qualifications" statement. These include traits such as honesty, intelligence, loyalty, tact, and willingness to work hard. You will also be sensitive, at later points, to personal dispositions, such as toward students, and to attitudes, such as toward race and sex, and to personal habits.

What you do need to list concretely under this heading now are characteristics of the person *essential* to success in this post in this institution. Is it important that the person be a Methodist? Have a community college background? Be a scientist? Have an earned doctorate? Taught at the college level? Have published in refereed journals? Be from within the state and have legislative contacts? Have a spouse who will entertain? Be something other than white and male? Be an alum? Be free to travel frequently? Need candidates be a U.S. citizen, pass a physical, or hold a pilot's license? Write it down.

Who Would Be Interested?

The final step — having wrestled with the nature of the job and of the person who could perform it — is to ask, who (that we want) would be interested in taking this job? What is that person likely to be doing now? Where? Why would he or she be willing to accept our offer? What *do* we offer?

This set of questions serves to connect the position and person specifi-

Four Errors

When the committee has pushed to conclusion its thinking about "what it takes to do this job" and about the knowledge, experience, abilities, and traits it will search for, it will have a statement — short, practical, and realistic — that will help it avoid four common errors that committees have made on other campuses.

The first error is that the committee is looking for indefinable, even ineffable qualities in a person, which it needn't specify since "we'll know them when we see them." But the abilities necessary to perform specific administrative tasks are indeed knowable. Failure to specify them now invites every form of bias, conflict, and erratic judgment to play itself out later.

The second error, captured in the delightful phrase of Rev. Timothy Healy of Georgetown University, is that the committee is "looking for God on a good day." In your search, you're not looking for a philosopher-king, saviour president, or superstar academic. You're looking for someone to do administrative tasks. You realize, too, in listing a page of *preferred* qualifications, that no one candidate will possess them all, and that human performance will always be situational and hard to predict. Your hope is to find a person with enough strengths in enough areas to avoid harm and get a job done reasonably well.

Error three is the myth that we'll get the best finalists in the end if we state the toughest criteria at the start. Everyone has seen the ads placed by such committees: "Candidates for the position must have a Ph.D., seven years of teaching experience at the university level, five years of same-level experience at a comparable institution or better, and publication credentials to qualify for a tenured appointment at the full-professor level." Never mind that this ad is from a third-line university looking to hire a registrar; or that under it almost no major university president in the U.S. today could have been hired; *this* committee will have standards!

What's been done, though, is to limit the looking to a handful of people meeting rather grand but only vaguely relevant paper requirements, at a price of screening out dozens of interesting people who could bring more to the post. There are plenty of ways, at later stages, to screen people out; in fact, that's the easy part. The error is to specify up-front requirements that keep you from talking with a full spectrum of talent at the end.

The final error, implicit in the example just given, is that we'll somehow be clearer, fairer, and more responsible if we advertise on the basis of specific, even quantifiable ("five years' experience") criteria. There are reasons, of a sort, for highly specific job requirements, such as to justify a salary before distant bureaucracies or to hold down the number of applications; but these put the cart before the horse. The requirements they lead to are talent-losers.

As to the notion that quantification means fairness, know that the entire process of search, screening, and selection rests on human judgment, yours and the college's, the exercise of which is indispensible, legal, and should be unabashed. Why do some committees so tightly specify requirements? As David Riesman wrote us, ". . . a great deal that goes on in a search is an effort to escape from judgment."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The preferred-qualifications statement becomes the committee's touchstone for all succeeding acts of recruitment, interview, and selection.

cation you've done up to now with the targeted recruitment you're about to begin. It is, too, a reality check working in both directions: if you can't answer the "who would be interested" question, it may be because your earlier work of specifying task and qualifications was too sweeping or vague (the "looking for God" syndrome); or if your answer to the question fails to point to specific places to recruit, again there may be a reality gap in your planning.

The lead question of this section — "who would be interested?" — helps push your thinking about potential candidates to deeper, more concrete levels. For example, at what career stage would our ideal candidate likely be at? Is this a first professional job for a recent graduate from a higher education doctoral program? A stepping-stone opportunity for an ambitious hard-charger? An end-of-career position for a veteran administrator? In other words, for whom would this job make sense professionally? The virtue of such discernment is that it deepens your understanding of what you're looking for, and points to where to begin looking.

Another cut at the "who would be interested" question is this: who would want to work for, and do well enough to continue, as an employee of the appointing officer? This is not the question (to be faced later) of what nominee that officer would accept, but a question of what candidate would be attracted to him or her as a boss. Is the officer you're advising a "hands off" manager? If so, you better be searching for someone who enjoys working autonomously and can be effective on those terms; hire that person under a supervisor who "micro-manages," though, and you'll be back searching within a year. The appointing officer may be a tight-ship disciplinarian, a help-oriented mentor, a person who forever never decides, a team-oriented leader, a dissembler about to leave — whatever he or she be, that's where the job offer will come from and what your nominee will be accepting or not. A rough sense of the employee-supervisor match is important because it so reflects what this effort of search is all about: engaging a person who can work effectively in a given organizational position.

Another question to ask is this: given what the institution is prepared to pay for this post, whom could we attract? A Pennsylvania college that offers a $20,000 registrar's salary, with modest benefits and no moving allowance, is highly unlikely to attract a person with a family moving from a California state university. Every search, in other words, has its realistic bounds. Acknowledging them puts you a step ahead for focused recruiting.

To whatever extent we can now say who would be interested, what is that person likely doing now? And where? The implicit answer of many search committees, especially those that like "five years' experience," is to say in effect, "Right now our ideal person is doing just the job that we want done but is doing it somewhere else, and since we're unique he or she will certainly want to do it here." The statement is a parody, of course, but use it as a check on your own assumptions. Will your best candidate be someone making a lateral move? Or will you target recruitment on people one step down, i.e., those with a good base of knowledge and abilities and for whom you'd be a step up in responsibility? If you go for a lateral move, might your new office-holder be bored, feel derailed in a career sense, or ever be promotable? On the other hand, you might try lateral recruitment if your institution, compared with others, offers candidates a significant step up in salary, higher professional prestige, or other inducements.

These last questions, which mix qualities of the candidate with aspects of the job's attractiveness, help focus a search committee's attention on what it, on behalf of the institution, has to offer in the position. You are trying to recruit somebody; what is it that you have to sell? Make a list.

Salary: is it relatively high or low? Fixed or negotiable? Within what range? Are there opportunities for raises, increments, or auxiliary income?

Benefits: are there any of unusual quality or value? Does the position offer security? A car? A nice office? Paid leave after five years?

Prestige: does the position or institution have any special cache? In what circles?

Special Office Situation: Is there a chance, because of retirements or expansion, to mold an office or change its directions?

Institutional Situation: Do you have good morale, budget balances, a supportive legislature, or positive enrollments to sell?

Other Opportunities: For promotion? For participation in important councils? To teach or advise students? For professional growth? To travel and attend conferences?

The Community: Are there opportunities for spousal employment? Good community schools? Is this an attractive, stimulating town or part of the country? Can a candidate find here a diversity of people and cultures?

Every institution has a special profile of characteristics that make it attractive to certain people; what are your significant attractors? List them in a positive way — fairly and candidly, not defensively. They become

Position Lore: The Athletic Director

This *Handbook* stresses at many points differences in search by institutional type. But the character of searches varies also by *position.* Unfortunately, there are dozens of quite different administrative positions — far more than this *Handbook* can be specific about. Instinctively, of course, a committee will know there's a difference between, say, a search for a medical chancellor and one for an admissions director.

The term may be too grand, but a "literature" exists about most administrative positions, often wisdom pieces or surveys run in the periodicals of the post's field. The *NASFAA Journal,* for example, carries articles on the work of financial-aid officers; for such a search, a committee might ask a reference librarian to retrieve a few of these for its reading.

There also exists a certain "lore" about search for given positions, the do's and don'ts of experienced search observers reflecting issues current to the post. Three or four phone conversations with leading practitioners can brief your committee on the lore relevant to your search.

To illustrate, we asked search consultants Harry Marmion and Cynthia Linhart of Peat Marwick Main and Company (New York) to brief us about one of today's trickiest searches, that for an athletic director. Their report:

Stories abound about the selection process for athletic directors.

- A nationally known educator was told by a university trustee that he could do all the campus academic searches, but the selection of an "AD" was far too important to be left to an educator.
- Another CEO wanted his athletic director to spend more time on campus; he was told by a trustee that the university could always attract an educational leader, but a good AD was hard to find.
- A football coach/athletic director left suddenly to take another position. The day after the resignation the president announced a successor would be named within a week "because of this position's importance to the public."

These example-stories, from big-time intercollegiate athletic programs, reflect the problems encountered at institutions with this emphasis. The following tips on the athletic-director search process concentrate on such programs, but in many ways are applicable to institutions with less emphasis on intercollegiate athletics.

DO

Take the time to set up a search committee reflecting the priorities and constituencies of an educational institution.

Try to separate the athletic director's position from that of the head coach of a major sport.

Go beyond prior athletic success to discern the ethical character of the candidate.

Endeavor to find a person with knowledge of budgets, finance, and planning (despite what support may be available within the athletic department).

Seek a person who believes in equality of opportunity for men and women in sports activities.

Seek permission before speaking to a candidate under contract to another institution.

DON'T

Hire a person based on prior athletic success alone.

Hire an individual without the normal, full background check of references, professional acquaintances, and independent sources.

Succumb to the argument that the coach of a major sport should have the title of Athletic Director as well.

Hire a person solely on the basis of ability to raise money, especially from external (booster) sources.

Hire a person without ascertaining the compatibility of personal with institutional philosophy about the place of athletics in an educational institution.

Be steamrolled into a hasty decision on an appointment because of supposed public or athletic "interests."

Allow employment controls to be supplemented with funds from outside normal sources, or to overcommit the institution to the athletic director.

a key part of your armamentarium of search, drivers of the PR and marketing steps you'll engage in next. And they sharpen your thinking about our original question, to whom will this post be attractive?

When the committee has completed its work of job analysis described in this chapter, the chair takes that work back to the appointing officer for approval. The step is more than a courtesy: the officer needs the chance to affirm that the institution's priorities for the position (Chapter One) are reflected in the preferred-qualifications statement that will now drive the search. And there is a practical issue at stake:

> "Once I announced my resignation, it's as though I became unclean."

an officer that doesn't approve the qualifications isn't going to appoint candidates brought forth on their basis—which is to describe a process that won't work. If there's no approval, in other words, the search should be stopped. So work to get it, then press on.

Summing Up

At this point, let's look back on what's happened and been accomplished.

The steps in this chapter may have spread over several days of quite intensive work — a level of effort that won't be required again until the last weeks of the search process (of final interviews and nomination).

The committee has resisted the temptation to rush ads and letters out the door and "get on with the job," and thereby avoided the big mistake behind so many failed searches, a failure to do homework. The search committee now holds as assets:

- an early experience of collaborative work, and thereby a better sense of itself as individuals and group;
- credibility and trust before relevant constituencies, achieved through consultation and openness;
- a good sense of the politics and special agendas that will surround the process it manages; and
- a good working relationship with the appointing officer.

The search committee, too, has in hand important products from its work:

- a final charge, negotiated and understood;
- a usable job description;
- a concrete vision of the job, coupled with
- a statement of preferred qualifications; and
- a sense of who would be interested; plus
- clues as to where to look; and
- a list of what it has to attract a candidate.

The committee has in hand, indeed, most of the language it needs for next steps of position announcement, ad-writing, recruitment, and correspondence. It has put together, in effect, a roadmap for its search.

The Search

Recruiting a Candidate Pool

An injunction heard from every search veteran we spoke with was this: "Committees have to undertake active search." We're not sure who exactly advocates "passive search" (an oxymoron), but the behavior warned against is clear enough: the hapless search committee that says at the start, "Let's place an ad and see what the mail brings."

Your committee will indeed post ads and position announcements, and they as a device should unearth at least a few interesting applicants. But too much is at stake in your work to leave matters to the mail. Most of the top people you'd like to interest in the post are happily and productively engaged elsewhere and will not be reading your want ad. They have to be recruited.

Your need, then, is to get your message in front of such people, intrigue them with your opportunity, and persuade them to allow you to consider their candidacy. Your object is to build a pool of qualified candidates from which you'll have a best chance of making the appointment you want. The active searching you do now, you realize, determines all: the ultimate appointment can't be any better than what you attract to the pool.

Where does a committee begin "active search?" In its own back yard.

Looking Inside

This *Handbook*, in Chapter One, already raised the advantages of promotion from within: the institution knows better what it's getting, continuity is served, loyalty evoked, it's more cost effective in the long run.

From a search committee's standpoint, finding a good internal candidate early on, a person who proves capable of appointment, saves the time and complication of external search. It can save a committee, too, from the vicissitudes of a search that mixes internal and external candidates: as soon as you turn outward for talent, insiders may assume rejection or slight, while outsiders, spotting internal candidacies, may assume the process is rigged (and shy away). Of course there are successful searches that mix internal and external candidates, but they labor under a burden of constant explanation.

Search committees often have an implicit bias against internal candidates, whether from the ravages of familiarity (or unfamiliarity!), or an assumption that people outside must be better than our own, or from a sense that picking an insider is a "cop out" to "rigorous search." But consider: promotion from within is the norm in American higher education in the replacement of administrators. Research by Kathryn Moore of Penn State shows that 55% of the thousands of mid- and line-level administrators she surveyed had been promoted from within. In doctoral-granting institutions, that figure rose to 63%; at smaller liberal arts colleges it was still 52%; internal candidates were the choice in 59% of searches for academic-affairs administrators, in 62% for student-affairs positions.

Contrary to what many search committees believe, there is no generally applicable law that demands external search. If a committee chooses to assemble an internal pool and make its choices from within, it may do so. Indeed, if the committee and appointing officer (or the latter alone) choose, without further search, to promote an "acting" to a post, that also can be done. These two statements do need qualification: in your institution there may in fact be a regulation or reason that prohibits either or both of these steps, as we'll note in a moment. But a general rule applies: don't assume in search, without checking, that any next logical step the committee may choose is impossible.

Under what circumstances might a committee decide to look internally first? Or go outside? Or open the door to all comers from the start? Here are six factors to weigh:

1. Availability. Are there credible internal candidates with an interest in the post? If not, then obviously the committee should commence external search immediately.

How does one ascertain whether there are internal candidates? By

> Too much is at stake in your work to leave matters to the mail.

campus-wide posting of the vacancy, by personal inquiries, then by waiting a stated interval to see who steps forward (a two or three week wait would seem adequate; in the SUNY system, internal posting must precede external advertisement by 45 days).

2. Timing. External search entails much longer time lines than a review of internal candidates. For a vacancy arising in fall or winter, that won't be a problem. For one arising in May or June, where a replacement must be in the post by August, it's a very big problem, one that would point a committee toward intensive search for inside candidacies (or lead the institution to appoint an "acting").

3. Position Level. A distinction often must be made between mid- and senior-level posts. That is, a strictly internal search may be appropriate for a director of residence halls but inapt for a provostship, or for a comptroller but not a deanship. In the case of both the provost's and dean's position, the post's constituencies are broad, the stakes are high, and politically the expectations for a broadest review of talent are very real. In both cases, people may welcome an eventual inside appointment, but they want that person's credentials tested against a national field. Only a full search process, given this expectation, can legitimate so crucial an appointment.

4. Affirmative Action. A further reason for opening external search may be that you simply won't find inside the numbers of women or minority candidates you need to help meet affirmative-action goals. Your affirmative-action officer should have a work-force analysis that can help you decide whether a requisite "affirmative pool" exists to proceed internally (these data might be secondary to whether your own internal recruitment in fact turns up women and minority applicants).

5. Other Regulations. Search committees in public institutions especially confront a variety of regulations that may decide the inside-outside question for them. Any vacant post above grade-level X or salary level Y, for example, may have to invoke a "national search."

6. Executive Preference. The choice of where to commence a search is important enough that a committee should always make it in consultation with the appointing officer. The latter, in fact, or even the president, may already have decided the issue for you, in your charge.

If circumstances permit or demand, how should a search committee proceed internally? "Active search" for internal candidates entails pretty straightforward steps: a position announcement is published or otherwise circulated as widely as possible; committee members themselves can prompt nominations or candidacies via personal contacts; the appointing officer, other administrators, and key faculty can be asked to come up with names; and direct inquiries can be made, perhaps by the chair, to potentially qualified individuals, especially to people within the office at stake. Once a small pool is assembled, steps of inquiry and interview follow in normal course as described in the next chapters, till you see if you have a person or persons who meet your specifications (from Chapter Three) and can be recommended for appointment.

A creative internal search can raise an alternative opportunity, namely to recommend investing in the professional development of an otherwise able person so that he or she can be ready for a post within months. This works best for the more "generalist" posts for which personal ability and traits count high, with specific knowledge a secondary concern. A bright, committed, ready-to-advance faculty or staff person, for example, could be recruited for a post in spring, then sent off for a summer of reading, visiting other campuses, institute attendance, or an outside internship, thereby to gain at least enough knowledge and perspective to start effectively by fall.

It is doubtful you'd invest such an effort in a newcomer from outside: the approach looks to the intentional development of internal human resources. It's a step less risky and expensive than the alternative of external search. It's an approach that can be used to advance women and minorities from within the institution. It realizes institutional mission more fully by placing alongside "student development" a parallel concept of "administrator development."

The Acting. A tough situation for many search committees is the presence and possible candidacy of an "acting" head of the office. There are few rules beyond sensitivity and common sense to guide you here in a situation that is often awkward.

Chances are the acting agreed to assume the post's duties on short notice, perhaps before he or she was fully prepared for it. Implicit promises may have attached to performance of those duties, or (often unfairly) the person may have been told in advance that he or she could *not* be a subsequent candidate, no matter what. The acting, out of institutional loyalty, may have put in a year of 65-hour weeks to keep an office afloat. A sense of debt owed may be in the air; what will happen to this person if an outsider is brought in? No one seems quite sure. To boot, there's a good chance the acting, who may have been an assistant in the office, is a woman or minority, a status you may want in an appointment.

How might a committee deal with this situation? Consider that prior to forming this search committee the appointing officer had three options:

- One was to find the job performance of the acting compelling enough to appoint him or her outright to the post. Given the existence of your committee, that obviously didn't happen.

■ Option two was to find the acting's job performance so disappointing that under no circumstances would the officer name the acting to the post. If the officer so decides, from the committee's standpoint there isn't a viable candidacy, and it moves on with its search. (This same result, without reflection on job performance, may come from a prior "no candidacy" stipulation.)

■ Option three was that the appointing officer found the acting's performance good enough to warrant consideration for appointment, but not so compelling as to dispense with wider search.

The committee has a potential problem, then, only in situation three. If it be the case, the chair might want to pay a courtesy call on the acting, to introduce the search and invite candidacy. Of course the acting may choose not to apply, which ends the matter. Or he or she may choose to declare for the post only later.

If the acting decides to apply at the start, should the search committee proceed right away to a decision on that single candidacy? This step is taken on occasion, partly out of consideration for the acting and partially, from a committee's standpoint, to unfetter subsequent search (of all internal candidacies, that of an acting can most scare off outside applicants). But there are compelling arguments against the step: it is unfair to other potential applicants, may violate affirmative-action or other regulations, probably isn't what the appointing officer intended, and forecloses too many other sources of talent for the post.

Other than early consideration, should the candidacy of an acting receive preferential treatment in later stages of a search? Search experts argue that, no matter who, all candidates should be treated alike (all should be treated *well*). An accommodation committees do make, especially in more colleague-minded institutions in which an acting has served well and now risks applying, is to bring, if it is at all plausible to do so, that person forward to the interview stage. Certainly you'll honor to the fullest any application from an acting or other inside candidate; colleagues will care very much about (and remember for a long time) your "fairness to George" or "how the committee treated Elizabeth."

Two final points about internal searching commend themselves here. First, in reviewing internal candidates, don't lose track of the job analysis and preferred qualifications the committee developed earlier. Claims of friendship, compassion, or familiarity tend to push aside analytic thinking. But the job specifications you've worked hard on are as relevant as ever.

Second, have no part in a fake search. (A fake search is one in which the appointing officer and "everybody" else knows in advance who or what kind of person will get the appointment, with a committee and "search" put out as window dressing.) If a certain person should or will be named anyway, get them appointed now. But play no role in a sham that induces false expectation and wastes countless hours of professional time.

What should you do if you smell a fake search? Investigate; press your findings within the committee. If it is fake, resign. If not, but the rumor is there, the committee needs to communicate its openness to safeguard the search.

External Search

This section begins with the assumption that your internal inquiries did not lead to an appointment so external search will commence.

That "active" search will proceed along two lines, rather analogous to hunting with a shotgun and a rifle: broadscale advertisement and focused contacts. We'll discuss each in turn, saving for a moment the question of *how* you want people to apply (which you will need to know in order to do these next steps of ad-writing and telephone work).

> **The ultimate appointment can't be any better than what you attract to the pool.**

Advertising. To get the position you're offering in front of the largest number of potential candidates at once, the place to start is with a broadscale advertisement of your search. (You do this step first because the time-lines for placing ads, having them reach people, and for response are longer.)

Fortunately for search committees in academe, there's one preeminent vehicle for such advertising, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, which is read weekly by 70% of all administrators in higher education and by virtually all managers, staff, and faculty in the job market or thinking of a position change. Placing an ad in the *Chronicle* is easy and quick — you can do so by phone — with full instructions found on the first page of the "Bulletin Board: Positions Available" section. A *Chronicle* display ad run two or three times might cost $600 to $900, and quite probably will bring you anywhere from 50 to 200 responses.

Given the preeminence and reach of the *Chronicle*, need you do any other advertising? In many cases the answer will be "no." In former days, committees would run companion ads in the Sunday *New York Times* or in a metropolitan paper, but these seldom make sense anymore. The exception would be raised by searches for positions in which your answer to the question, "Where would our candidate be working now?", included a dimension of "outside of higher education" — your candidate business officer, development or PR person, or computer czar might presently be working in industry. In these cases, you'll want to advertise in business or trade publications read by the

Don't assume, without checking, that any next logical step the committee may choose is impossible.

specialists you're after, or in certain editions of the *Wall Street Journal.*

Other options? *Change* magazine is the second most widely read publication in higher education, and is seen by a high percent of all academic-affairs leaders; but its bimonthly schedule often presents too long a time-line for search purposes, a condition that applies also to most journals. Affirmative-action publications will solicit your ad, though it's hard to know who reads them who won't already have seen your ad in the *Chronicle.* An exception may be *Black Issues in Higher Education,* which is read widely by black academics and has been commended to us by correspondents.

A best remaining bet may be applicable small newsletters such as those put out by national, regional, or state associations of admissions officers, librarians, institutional researchers, and so on (people in those offices on your campus should be able to identify relevant newsletters for you.)

Focused Contacts. Now attention should turn to the person-to-person networking implied by the term "active search." The object here is to reach good candidates who are happily and productively employed elsewhere — and who are not reading the weekly ads in the *Chronicle* or *Wall Street Journal.*

Many search veterans argue these are the people you most want to reach. The most likely person to be happy and productive in your post is just that right now somewhere else, whereas general purpose ads tend to attract responses from people who are unhappy, underengaged, or out of work (not exclusively, though).

A Korn-Ferry search consultant put it this way to us: "I start at the other end of the process from most committees. As soon as I complete the task analysis and have a sense of what's needed, from that day on I'm looking for finalists. My job is to get a college five terrific people it wouldn't otherwise see."

You can pay a consultant thousands of dollars to find those people for you — and spend every penny well in doing so — but, again, there's no mystery to what these professionals do, and you can do it yourself.

What they do is "network like crazy." They know that ambitious, mobile administrators are joiners, attenders, and contributors to multiple, special-purpose networks, and that top administrators achieve visibility within those networks. These networks (like those in academic disciplines) can be based on a variety of factors, including graduate origin, political cause, research interest, issue caucus, a status of sex or race, organizational office, institutional propinquity, and so on. The trick is to identify relevant networks, and informed reporters within them, then get those people to identify potential candidates for you. (A valuable asset brought by a search consultant is a deep knowledge of networks, plus a Rolodex stuffed with phone numbers.)

Where to begin? By all means, with the homework you did in the preceding chapter. If you're that Pennsylvania college with a $20,000 salary that must search locally for a registrar, you've already identified your first set of phone calls, ten perhaps, to head registrars at area colleges. If your dean's search led you to answer the "where" question with a statement, "as an associate dean at an Ivy League institution," there are eight letters or phone calls to start with. If your search for an athletic director prompted you to look for a "wise hand respected for integrity," start with calls to the AD's of the other schools in your conference.

Sometimes office heads are reluctant to suggest as candidates their best person or two. Your creativity can circumvent that barrier. A community college looking for an admissions director phoned the college counselors in a dozen of its feeder high schools and asked, "Who are the sharpest assistant directors of admissions who've visited you lately?" It quickly got a list of twenty names, including four who garnered multiple mentions, called them, and got several to apply. (Its calls to the counselors earned it valuable points back in the schools, too.)

Step one, then, works directly off your homework in a highly focused, targeted way: knowing what you're looking for and where it might be found, you work the phones to find and get your post's opportunity in front of good people. Search consultants are especially creative and persistent about pursuing such leads: they seldom assume any person wouldn't be interested. They work as match-maker selling an opportunity, and patiently build good candidates into the pool. If they locate an especially able prospect, they don't take an initial "no" as the end of it. "What would it take to get you interested? I'd like to send you information and call back in a week."

A further avenue for search entails looking into networks within the field of specialty (library science, continuing education, etc.). How do you learn of these? One way is to ask within that office on your own campus; or to ask friends in other colleges; or to telephone people in that office in sister institutions; or to query officers of the relevant professional associations.

This last suggestion is almost a "must." Virtually every administrative specialty now has an organized professional society — 50 or 60 of them in all — and, since these tend not to be large (a few hundred to a thousand or two members), the networks within the field, and their up-and-comers, tend to be known. There are various higher-education directories that list such associations, or you can consult in a larger library the *Encyclopedia of Associations* (an annual from Gale Publishing).

Again, the purpose of these phone

calls is to find the relevant networks and key informants within them. It does little good to call an officer of the Association for Institutional Research and ask for "the networks" or "names of candidates." Tell that officer (from our earlier example) that you're looking for an IR person with a special interest in assessing student-learning outcomes. The officer should know the ringleaders of that conversation within AIR, and even know their phone numbers, too, which gets you off and running.

In addition to position-specific associations, there's another circle of associations organized around institutional type. Is your institution Baptist, devoted to liberal education, and located in Georgia? The descriptors name three associations your college probably holds membership in, each of which has networks you can contact. Your business or president's office can give you a list of the associations to which your institution pays dues. Any higher-education directory will list dozens more you might selectively be in touch with.

You may be able to locate, too, special networks of interest based on your sense of the post's tasks and preferred qualifications. To give specific examples, your dean's search committee may be eager to find candidates with experience in collaborative learning or writing across the curriculum or who will want to change undergraduate teacher education or implement a language-proficiency requirement. There are indeed particular networks of people devoted to each of these causes. You locate them through contacts within your own faculty, by checking conference programs, or by calls to "generalist" associations like AAHE, AAC, or AAUP.

Those same approaches to inquiry can lead you to still another set of networks, those devoted to talent identification among women or minorities. You "go to the people who are known to know well," in the words of Judy Touchton of the American Council on Education's Office of Women. How do you locate the networks? Calls to ACE's offices of women and minorities can provide the leads you need.

There is more you can do: in a search for black candidates, for example, you would first enlist the help of your affirmative-action officer and of black administrators and faculty, then look outside to the advice of black educators and leaders of black caucuses within professional organizations. In addition, make a practice of asking every informant from every network you reach to think specifically about black prospects (and other minorities and women).

Other good tips and resources for affirmative-action recruitment may be found on pages 7-12 of Ohio State's *Handbook for Faculty Searches* (see Further Reading).

A related way of identifying specific talent is to tap into the handful of leadership-development programs and institutes alive in higher education today. These include the ACE Fellows Program and the management institutes at Harvard, Bryn Mawr, and Carnegie-Mellon. ACE's Center for Leadership Development helps with leads to such activities, and to potential candidates. In your own state, chances are there exists a "center for the study of higher education" at a major university (there are 90 such graduate programs); they can often provide detailed descriptions of people with backgrounds relevant to a range of mid-level positions.

What if you're after a top generalist? A good place to look for those is in the publications, committees, and conference programs of generalist associations (such as ACE, AAUP, AAHE, or AAC), or to ask leading editors, writers, stagers of conventions and workshops, and foundation officers.

For non-academic posts (and for a fee), the Higher Education Administration Refferal Service (HEARS, in Suite 510, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036) can provide your committee with resumes of professionals in its registry who are seeking posts like your own.

Search committees often have an implicit bias against internal candidates.

Making the Calls. In pursuing networks and contacts, is it best to write or call? To the pro's who do this for a living, a call is always preferable: it's best at conveying your sense of special opportunity; it allows for probes and follow-up. Busy informants, too, would often rather spend a focused five minutes on the phone with you than undertake to correspond. Of course some contacts may be hard to reach, or won't take your calls, so a letter becomes necessary. An option is to introduce your subject in a brief letter, say you'll call on a certain date, and telephone then (which has given your informant a moment in advance to jot down an idea or two for you).

As recently as a few years ago, well organized searches routinely generated dozens, even hundreds of personally addressed letters to a wide range of university and association presidents, announcing the vacancy and inviting nominations. This is less done today; committees tended to encounter low response rates, lower-level replies, and presidents with annoying tendencies to nominate people they hoped to *lose*. Now, most committees (and all search professionals) avoid generally broadcast letters. They write instead only to specific informants they trust hearing from or whom they want to reach by phone. Once they have a key informant on the phone, they feel confident they can push beyond that "impulse to dump" to learn what's there.

The use of nominations to build a pool has also tended to fade (except in presidential search). Anybody likes to be "nominated," so don't hesitate to use the flattery of the term in calling people you've learned about through networking. But the

A sense of debt owed may be in the air; what will happen to this person if an outsider is brought in? No one seems quite sure.

process is so easy for candidates to manipulate — they have a friend send their name in — that no useful distinction can obtain in later screening between presumed nominees and self-applicants.

To a committee member reading this far, "active" external search sounds like a great deal of telephone work. It is. But committee members needn't do all of it themselves. The appointing officer, senior administrators, faculty members, an assistant to the president, the associate provost, even the president or chancellor (for senior posts) should do some of this calling for you. All have contacts, discretionary time, and a stake in the outcome. Thus supported, committee members might, in fact, spend more of their own time making follow-up phone calls to prospects as names turn up.

When you (or a caller on your behalf) do reach an informant in a network, a good idea is to decline politely his or her offer to contact someone for you. As any good salesperson knows, the only sure way to know a call has been made the right way is to make it yourself. Do ask whether you may use the informant's name in introducing yourself to the prospect.

The call to a prospect is easier to make than most people imagine. The person you call is flattered, and will usually hear you out. According to Kathryn Moore's research, at any moment a fourth of all administrators are entertaining a job move. Probably another fourth can be intrigued if approached correctly. Since this first call is probably to his or her office, do ask whether it's convenient to talk for a few moments; describe the opening, tell of their nomination, and say you'd like to send the person materials about the institution and position. A bit of enthusiasm on the phone helps. You might schedule a follow-up phone appointment for a few days after the materials have been received. Mindful of the prospect's need for confidentiality, ask if you might use a home address and phone number. (But please don't send big envelopes into a prospect's office stamped PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL; everyone thinks they know what that means. . . ."It's either a search committee or dirty magazines.")

The Application

What will it mean for your search to have a person "apply" for the position? What is it you'll ask respondents to your ads, and prospects on the second call, to tell the committee about themselves?

The problem. As a result of our conversations with search veterans, we're persuaded that new approaches to position application have become necessary for administrative search. This section begins, then, by describing what's normally done, tells how it's been found wanting, then suggests alternatives for you to consider.

The normal practice is easy enough to describe (and is on full view in *Chronicle* want ads): following a hundred or so general words about the position and institution, applicants are asked to send the committee "a current vita and three letters of reference." Often transcripts or a credentials file will be requested, too, or an application form mentioned.

The shortcomings of this approach — which may be adequate for initial faculty appointments — become all too apparent in administrative search. Your committee wants to screen on the basis of specific "knowledge, experience, abilities, and traits" related to a specific post, then confronts vitae that give little hint of what a person can accomplish administratively. There will be pages of information about degrees, job titles, research projects, publications, memberships, teaching assignments, and so on, none of which raises more than vague inference about the person's administrative ability. Letters of reference dribble in behind, some fresh but many canned, all of them positively glowing. More such letters arrive in credentials files, neat folders so thoroughly candidate-managed as to have almost no probative value. Then come the transcripts, which do little more than remind one again that most of us received mostly A's as graduate students.

The fruits of an ill-conceived application process show up at the next stage, when the committee must screen dozens or hundreds of applications to find the ten or twenty for next-stage investigation: there's simply no rational basis for doing that screening. A telling circumstance is that we asked search-committee veterans on a dozen occasions, "How do you screen 200 applications down to 20 without losing significant talent?", and never heard a satisfactory answer. It took a while to recognize the problem: when you start with only vaguely relevant information, there *is* no way to screen rationally.

Absent such a way, but needing to screen in any case, committees plunge ahead with resume review, in many cases indulging every form of bias: people from "name" schools over the lesser known, male career patterns over female (or the reverse), research distinction over teaching interests over administrative background, and so on: any applicant of odd or "lesser" status is sure to be gone. When search committees come to look more closely at their final ten candidates, a common experience is that of disappointment. The explanation often is that the committee's own screening left its five or seven most interesting people back on the table.

So there must be a better way. The advice to committees using this *Handbook* is this: if old ways haven't worked, rethink the way you have people apply. Try your *own* formula,

even as we now think through one ourselves.

New Principles

The basis for a better shot at information from candidates, the principles for a different approach, may be five in number.

1. Better Candidate Information. The process should start with better information in the hands of prospects. A problem now is that people apply on the basis of the skimpiest of information (what's in a *Chronicle* ad), so nothing they send comes tailored to your setting or questions.

A better start, then, would be to run ads announcing the position, even touting the opportunity a bit, then inviting prospects to write the committee for more information. That information — job description, a boiled-down version of your task analysis and preferred-qualifications statement, salary and benefits, maybe a document from or about the office in question, a sheet about the committee and its time-table, a catalog and other materials about the institution and area — goes to inquirers with an encouraging letter and instructions about applying.

The point, again, is that you're looking for applications based on good knowledge and forethought, and that can be responsive to your issues. With good up-front information, you save yourself from at least some inappropriate applications, and provide prospects with an informed opportunity not to apply, which is a favor to them.

2. Request Tailored Information. A reasonable burden can be placed on applicants at this earliest stage to provide the committee with information about his or her knowledge, abilities, and accomplishments relevant to the post as described. Asking for this one step of initial work can heighten the commitment to your process of genuinely interested candidates, and appropriately discourage others.

However, an up-front task cannot impose an onerous burden on a busy professional (like recopying a resume onto a five-page application). Nor should it force him or her into the position of supplicant. Forget asking busy people, therefore, to compose a 500-word essay on "my philosophy of education." Anything asked for at this stage has to seem appropriate, professional, and doable with dispatch.

3. Forget Letters of Reference. There's no role for letters of reference at this stage of the process, and maybe never. Now or later, as universal experience testifies, such letters aren't probative, so do the entire academy a big favor — save it a thousand hours of professional time! — by *not* asking applicants for letters of reference.

Even at a later stage such letters may be useless, given candidate control over their prompting and writer's fears about disclosure. "The telephone and lawsuits made the device obsolete," one dean told us. His recommendation (and ours, too): "When it's time, get on the phone for *private* conversations with people you sense know the candidate's work best."

Such letters have the additional, sharp disadvantage of *forcing* your best prospects to tip their hand now before colleagues about their candidacy — something your best prospects will not want to do at this stage.

4. Only What You Need to Know Now. The process of eliciting information from candidates should be driven by a sense of your committee's stages of review, with different pieces or levels of information needed only at successive points from smaller and smaller numbers of people. At the start, then, when only gross screening is contemplated, the information requests you impose focus on learning who the most interesting people are, and no more; you don't need now, as you may later, a list of people to call, confirmation of degrees, transcripts, salary histories, and so on, so don't ask for them. You want an initial application that takes no more than an hour or so for a busy professional to complete. Be sure that hour is used responding to the questions important to you at this stage.

> **Claims of friendship, compassion, or familiarity tend to push aside analytic thinking.**

5. Be Candid About Salary. Harkening back to an item mentioned earlier, be as up-front as possible with prospects about issues of salary and benefits. The frequent statement, "salary negotiable," makes trouble for committees and can raise hard feelings down the line among candidates who feel misled. If the job pays in the 50s, say so: that figure alone will attract many good people who are paid less, and save the time of other people for whom that figure would not mean advancement.

Diffidence on the point comes in part from notions that "gentlemen don't speak of money" (really?) or from institutional craftiness in hoping to land someone good (like, say, a woman) who will sign for less. As a search committee, you're not in charge of paying people or salary negotiations, but strive for the sake of fair search to bring forward all the candor you can about matters of compensation. If there's a minimum salary, or a range, state it; allow the expression "salary negotiable" in your materials only if it truly is, and significantly so.

An Application Package

With some sense of these principles (or your own better ones), we're ready to put in place the elements of an initial application. Here are three such elements you might require as a package:

1. A resume, listing all the usual information, including details of faculty work (for academic-affairs posts) and, most importantly, functional detail about relevant administrative experience (e.g., name of post, dates held, responsibilities, people

supervised, accomplishments attributable to candidate, reason for leaving).

2. A letter from the candidate to the committee chair, of no more than two pages, perhaps (as you specify) commenting on the materials received and volunteering what strong suits or special agendas he or she might bring to the post. (Do not convert this to an essay; administrators do not write essays, they write letters, and you want to see one.)

3. A concise work sample, a piece or two of prior, relevant work accomplished by the candidate, this so that he or she may display for the committee qualities of thought and professional understanding. Samples may include letters, memoranda, a prospectus, short foundation proposal, financial analysis, statistical report, marketing plan, speech text, or whatever, the one expectation being that the sample(s) bear relation to tasks of the vacant post.

The tripartite "application" here proposed meets tests of job-relatedness, ease of accomplishment (for able people), appropriateness to the stage of search, and utility for the committee. Its parsimony and confidentiality (only the candidate, no other person, need know or do anything at this stage) will be welcomed by good prospects.

In discussing this application plan, members of the project's Advisory Board agreed that a fresh start needs to be made on the matter of administrative applications; endorsed the five principles; accepted the ideas of requesting an enhanced resume and focused letter; but expressed concern about the third element, that of the work sample. Would submissions be consistent? Prove much? How could you know they were the applicant's own work?

Good questions. That third element, especially, is a proposal, no more, untried as it is in higher education settings. Work samples are used in corporate settings, and there are rough parallels in collegiate selective admissions (selection specialists look less for consistent elements in these samples than for something extra, a "spark" in a candidate). If you try a work sample, or arrive at a better model for the concept, let us know how it worked out for this *Handbook's* next edition.

The Application Period

One final question arises: how long should we keep the application process open? How tight or far out should we set any date for the receipt or review of applications?

No hard and fast rule can apply; how much time does your committee have for the entire process? A November start presents a different situation from an April start. As a general rule, never stint on any steps at the front end of a search (the job analysis, the consultations, the pool building); time can be made up later a lot easier than can early mistakes. It would surely be a mistake, as we saw in one search, to allot three weeks for applications and three months for all the rest; arguably, those proportions should be reversed (the search in question failed). Other things being equal, and given the importance of pool building and the time it takes to follow-up on leads, allowing yourself eight to ten weeks for receipt of applications might make sense.

In the 70s, legal minds persuaded many institutions to impose absolute application deadlines ("Applications received after 4:00 p.m. CST, April 2, 1978, cannot be considered."). Somehow this would be "fairer." At least it was uniform. But horror stories circulated of carefully recruited candidates subverted by the mails, of the perfect candidate unearthed a week beyond the deadline who could never be considered, or of a good "solution" appointment that couldn't be made because that person hadn't formally applied earlier.

Given these circumstances, and where regulation permits, a different practice is now recommended: the date set by the committee is not that of an absolute deadline for consideration, but that on which it will begin review of applications. The approach puts candidates on notice as to when materials are expected to be on hand, while leaving options open to the committee for later stages of search.

Beyond questions of date, must a person formally "apply" to qualify for committee consideration? In application-deadline institutions, most of them public, the answer is usually "yes." But in many other instiutions no such rule obtains. What this allows a committee to do, especially for a top-level post like a law school deanship, is court senior persons over time, your "prospects," very special people the committee has tentatively intrigued with the post but who won't risk formal candidacy now for fear of disclosure. Accommodations may be necessary to keep prospects on the line till later stages of the search, only at which point will they have to declare and provide you with access to information and references.

Summing Up

The most important points made in this chapter are that an eventual appointment cannot be better than the talent you recruit now to your pool, and that getting the pool you want demands active steps of recruitment. The chapter's lengthy sections on "focused contacts" and "making the calls," which draw heavily on the experience of search professionals, aim to help you build the kind of candidate pool from which a top-notch appointment can be made.

In its opening pages, this chapter raised for thought the special sensitivities you'll need for dealing with internal candidates and the "acting." In its concluding sections, the argument is made that you'll need to rethink the customary application process to realize from candidates the information you'll need for rational screening — the topic of our next chapter.

The Screening

Identifying Talent Among Applicants

The date for application review having arrived, a week of intensive reading lies ahead for the committee. Members will now cull through what seem daunting piles of applicant materials to locate candidates of highest promise. In this chapter, the committee screens a hypothetical 200 applications down to eight. It's a task that demands care: these are choices about real people, colleagues who've entrusted their candidacy to your judgment.

Initial Steps

Has your committee acknowledged receipt of all applications? Conveyed a time-schedule to applicants? Sent them an additional piece or two of information recently to enhance their interest in your search? Fine; on to the screening.

Begin by asking a committee member or your personnel officer to run a "census" on your applicant pool. What is the number and percent of women candidates in it? And of minorities, so far as can be known? Of applicants from community colleges, or other relevant background? When you have these data, ask this question: are we *satisfied* with the composition of our pool? An institution that is determined to identify women for the post will not be happy with a pool of 200 with three women in it. You have the option of stopping here and reopening recruitment, till you achieve the pool you need.

Assuming the pool seems robust enough, proceed with your screening. Save your census, though; you'll need its data for later analyses.

The next step is to prune your pool of inappropriate applications. No matter how careful your application procedure, your search for a provost will still generate submissions from graduate students, cranks, and dentists looking for second careers. . . . people (and this is the criterion) the institution would under no circumstance appoint. Your personnel officer or chair, in doing the census, might flag such applicants for review by a couple of committee members, whose agreement knocks them out of the pool. If you have 200 applicants overall, maybe a dozen or two can be so removed, conserving committee reading time.

The First Cut

At this point, let us say, your 200 starters are now at 180. Here you have a choice to make: shall *every* committee member read *all* 180 folders? Having everybody read everything has obvious advantages; the lean, three-part applications you've elicited enhance chances for each member to read a larger number; maybe your committee received 58 applications, not 200, and it's spring break — in which case, let everyone read on.

More typically, time presses, committee members are busy, and an expedient must be devised. One is to split the pile, or divide it in three or four, and have 2-3 person teams do the reading. Another is to engage a consultant to "read down" the pile, under your explicit instructions (if you have a search firm in the picture, it will suggest performing this step for you). A third is to ask the chair or a subcommittee to do all the reading and flag a next round of cuts, again, under full-committee instruction and with readers' concurrence needed to eliminate any candidate.

On what basis would these early cuts be made? The answer may depend on the actual size of your pool. In the next section of this chapter, a fuller methodology for screening decisions is outlined. If in fact your committee has but several dozen applications, skip forward to that section and put to use those methods now. But if 180 folders remain on the table (or 412, as we observed in one search), quicker methods have to be used.

Most commonly at this point, committees form 2-3 teams to do the first-level screening. Each team reads applicant folders holistically, employing a simple form on which they rate applicants 1-5 on three dimensions (e.g., aptness of background, evidence of preferred qualifications, apparent special talent). The separate scores on each applicant are then tallied and the candidates rank-ordered, after which the full committee, prompted by its score reports, eliminates candidates through

Your search for a provost will generate submissions from graduate students, cranks, and dentists looking for second careers.

discussion.

How far should this initial round of short-cut reading take you? Some search consultants like to cut the pile down to 20-25 people right away; but we've heard arguments that only the bottom third or half of a pool should be quickly disposed of. Let your own sense of the talent in the pool, and trust in your reading, be the guide here. A reasonable goal would be to reduce the pool to a size where it can then be read by the entire committee — given lean applications, that number might be between 40 and 75, with the actual number dependent on where natural break points develop in the ranking.

An important caution, as you review folders at early stages of screening: *watch your mindset.* "There are so many folders here, so much reading to do, we've *got* to cut these down. . . ." A "psychology of elimination" takes hold in which readers look for any excuse to get rid of someone ("Aha! Only a master's degree!"). It's at this point that mistakes are made, that the nontraditional or different candidacy is lost, that the pool gets stripped down to a mid-level common denominator. (That mindset also may be why some of your women or minority candidates get lost.)

The right mindset, admittedly within a slogging task, is to be *talent hunting.* As screeners you should be looking for interesting people who could bring something special to your post. To that end, a strongly recommended procedure is that each committee-member reader, in the example of a cut from 180 to 60, must bring forward two "finds" who will be placed without challenge in the new, reduced pool.

One final step: have your personnel officer or a committee member re-do the original census on the new pool of 60. Then ask, are we satisfied with its composition? Compared with the original pool, have we disproportionately been losing talent we want? If, for example, the original pool was 29% female but the reduced pool is 10% (just 6 women), the suggestion of bias in your screening, and of unacceptable result, should lead you to halt, look back, and work to correct. . . or, reopen recruitment.

Screening for Talent

Let's return to our 60 or so persons in the reduced pool and see how — with minimal bias and loss of talent — the committee might identify a dozen or two candidates for next levels of investigation. The step is tricky: the obviously weaker applicants are already gone. Chances for real mistakes rise.

The necessary thing at this stage is to establish a more systematic procedure for evaluating candidates, one that mines thoroughly the applicant information you have and that keeps your eye on the specific post at stake. To these ends, candidate rating forms will be developed. The quantification raised by these forms will *not* prevent bias or decide any applicant's fate — only you can do that. Steps of rating help *focus* individual reading, then committee-wide discussion.

Here are two approaches to the rating of applicants, followed by an idea about how to use them together. Only the first approach assumes, mostly for purposes of example, that you've chosen to use the three-part application proposed in the previous chapter (adapt as necessary).

The first approach starts with the tripartite character (resume, letter, work sample) of the application prompted by the committee. Each of these parts will be separately evaluated. Three teams, of two committee members each, are formed to read and rate the application parts. Each team rates the part it reads on three dimensions using a scale of one (low) to five (high). The dimensions or criteria on each team's scale, of course, differ by what its application part may evidence. Thus the resume readers' three criteria might look to issues of career suitability to the post, evidence of productive accomplishment, and match with preferred qualifications. The letter readers rate for quality of written expression, quality of thought or analysis, and evidence of preferred qualifications. Work samples are rated for quality of thought or analysis, depth of expertise or understanding, and evidence of preferred qualifications. (These dimensions, loosely stated here as examples, need tightening to your specific purposes. There must be a consistency between your job analysis, what you asked for with the application, and the rating criteria you now employ.)

At the end of all reading, the committee has on hand three separate score sets of three dimensions each (nine numbers in all) for every candidate. These can be tallied and the candidates grouped on a numeric spectrum from high to low.

A second approach is the one used before, though now it may be done with greater formality and care. That is, committee members or subcommittees read applicant files holistically against criteria of the preferred qualifications. As before, all three application parts are read together by each reader, following which rating scales of 1-5 are used to record judgments about candidate knowledge, experience, and abilities (the application we posited won't support "trait" rating). These scores are then tallied and candidates ranked, leading to a second, somewhat different grouping of candidates.

Both approaches could be employed by a committee that chose to do so. For a committee of six, one idea would be to have the three members with somewhat greater available time do the holistic reading (all 60 folders), while each remaining com-

mittee member, joined by a faculty/staff partner approved by the committee, heads a two-person team rating an application part. Alternatively, if the committee feels confident about scores from its prior screen (and leery about involving outside readers), it might look now to the first method above, divide into three teams to read the separate application parts, in that way generating a new, ranked grouping of candidates.

Experts provide additional tips for committees screening candidates at this stage. One is to do the rating as much as possible at one point in time; reading dribbles and drabbles of folders over busy days leads to impatient, inconsistent judgment. So set aside an afternoon and evening for your reading. Another is that a psychologist or personnel officer can show you how to sharpen the rating questions, resolve discrepant scores, improve inter-rater reliability, and use all numbers from 1 to 5 fully so the resulting spread is more marked (though too fine a point can be made of all this). Another point: keep records of the process, that someone else could later understand. Finally (very important), each member on each rating sheet should write at the bottom any notable strengths, anomalies, missing information, or "wish we knew's;" the committee will need and use such notes shortly.

As a matter of principle, committee members should excuse themselves from rating any candidate in whom they have a personal interest, and disclose that interest to the rest of the committee. A member with personal knowledge of a candidate should share it with the committee, and place a memo about the knowledge in the candidate's folder.

Review and Decision

The ratings process completed, the committee now has before it score sets for each of its sixty candidates; these typically lead to natural groupings of candidates. The grouping you're now most interested in is that sizeable one at the top, numbering perhaps 11, 15, or 19 people.

Most of the candidates whose scores push them into that rank are no doubt capable and worth pursuing. Your apprehension now is about individuals your even-handedness and quantification may have left behind. Would your semi-finalist pool for the University of Chicago presidency have included that 29-year-old law dean from afar, Robert Maynard Hutchins? Would you still be in a position to realize the brilliant appointment we observed recently of an assistant professor from a small college, a woman artist, to head a foundation-funded national project?

As before, to avoid unwanted bias and talent loss in the pool, two steps suggest themselves. First, run the census again ("Do we have the quality of pool we want at this point?"). Second, insist, in a spirit of talent hunting, that each committee member bring forward *one* (this time) candidate who is too interesting not to know more about. (One way to spot the latter: candidates who scored high on two dimensions or application parts but low on a third — it may be an artifact of the information provided.)

These caveats in mind, the search committee needs a good, full-afternoon discussion to review its findings and arrive at a pared-down pool of, say, 20 candidates (the highest scorers plus your add-backs). Let fine points about the importance of various qualifications come out in this meeting; make a note about needs for further information about some candidates. Remember in your discussion that it is the *committee's best judgment*, not the quantification, that moves candidates forward. . . you used rating forms to prompt careful reading, to identify and sort candidates into convenient groupings of high, medium, and low interest, but

Equal Treatment?

Through the stages of screening described in this chapter, should any candidates receive preferential treatment?

The universal advice of committee veterans is "no." The reason is fairness, as much to yourself and the search's integrity as to candidates. Let the talent rise to the top. As to being sure that "certain candidacies" are treated "fully and well," the safest course is to treat all candidacies that way.

Are there exceptions to this rule? As mentioned earlier, it may be reasonable for a committee to decide in advance that it will bring forward to the interview stage an admired internal candidate or an "acting."

What about people you've specially recruited? These probably should not be subject to an exception. If a person you were eager about earlier fails to make a cut, you might want to ask "why?" as a check on your screening. But no good case can be made for stringing along a candidacy that just isn't competitive. Similarly for the "special" candidate nominated by your president or an influential legislator.

Committees have been known to keep alive candidacies of women or minorities just because of their status. But how sensible or fair can that be, when the object of screening is to bring forward people with real potential to be appointed? If you no longer have appointable minority or women candidates at some stage, the realistic step is to stop the process and renew your recruitment.

A final point: in higher-level searches, there may be people at this stage who you do not enter into the screening process at all. These are your "prospects," that small number of talented people you are still trying to interest in the job and who are not yet formal applicants.

More typically, time presses, committee members are busy, and an expedient must be devised.

all of that was but preparatory to your own discussion and judgment.

An Interim

At this point there are administrative steps to take, then a welcome pause of ten to fifteen days.

You began with 200 applications and arrived at 20 candidates of interest; write the 180 now a letter of respect and gratitude informing each that he or she is no longer under consideration.

The second step is to telephone each of your 20 remaining candidates, tell them of the search's progress, and confirm their interest. In the call, referring back to committee records and member notes at the bottom of rating sheets, you will ask most of these candidates for an additional piece or two of information (about their resume, for example), this to round out applicant folders in a way that permits fairest comparison. This is the stage, too, at which to arrange with candidates for additional, relevant information you or they would like to have on the table at this point — a long-form resume, a recent article they've written, a new work sample, a colleague letter detailing an accomplishment of interest, or whatever, though within ten days, please.

Two weeks later, committee members will need to read all the remaining candidate folders again (most of them now augmented), for fresh perspective on people and a sense of the pool as a whole. You probably will find, from phone calls and correspondence, that two to four candidates have withdrawn and that your pool now numbers, say, seventeen.

Identifying Finalists

The remaining task of screening is to identify from the seventeen some six to eight finalists for much deeper investigation and subsequent interviewing. You'll identify those finalists through sustained discussion, person by person, in full committee. Set aside appropriate time in a comfortable room for the task . . . . it can take another full afternoon. The chair's leadership skills and the committee's sense of mutual regard count a lot at this juncture.

It's hard to advise a group on just how to proceed through such a crucial session, other than to be mindful of what's already been said in this *Handbook* and done by the committee to date: mine carefully the information you have, stay focused on the job as you've defined it, look to your preferred qualifications, ask who fits them and would perform best, be mindful of your own biases. One rule most committees insist upon: in selecting finalists, no single individual can block or insist upon a given candidacy.

Selecting "six to eight" finalists is arbitrary but has a sense to it, according to search veterans. For a busy committee, a dozen or more candidates may be too many to investigate thoroughly. Fewer than six, and subsequent withdrawals plus candidates who don't hold up upon investigation may leave you with fewer people than you want for the interview stage.

A caveat obtains at this final stage of screening. This *Handbook* suggests that you might cut from seventeen down to six or eight based upon a review of "paper" credentials alone. For a mid-level search run by a committee with little help, the step is defensible and may be all that is feasible.

For a senior-level search run by a committee with the time and help, additional steps of information-gathering may be indicated here. A best bet in that regard would be to ask each of the remaining seventeen candidates to give you permission now to call three agreed-upon informants . . . . that's about 50 phone calls, but they will be worth it.

A compromise step is to attempt to get down to a dozen candidates via "paper review," then make that (fewer) number of reference calls as an aid to further screening.

In presidential search, search firms like to use paper and the phone to reduce a pool to about ten, then convene the committee and remaining candidates at an airport hotel for a two-day round of interviewing, two hours with each candidate. Basically this is a screening device, designed to eliminate a few people and court the rest, and it works (it can also cost $5-8,000 to do).

These potential steps reflect the fact that final stages of screening will always depend on situational factors: the level of the post, character of your pool, and committee resources. The additional steps of investigation you trigger now depend, too, on your confidence in the paper information you've assembled and on your consequent need to impose new requests on candidates — at risk of their exposure, which could drive a few people from your pool earlier than you or they want.

After the Screen

Once the committee has identified, say, eight finalists for further inquiries, should the remaining nine of the seventeen be contacted? Yes, right away, with the facts as they stand. In discussion, several of the nine may have attracted so little support that their candidacy should be considered at an end, and they should be so informed. A handful may have been put on reserve or "hold" while a first group is investigated; they should be told of that fact. Syracuse University dean Samuel Gorovitz writes,

> Be as honest as possible in dealing with candidates. The most regularly deceived candidates are those "on hold." They're not on the short

Thinking About Bias

Bias means special things to a lawyer or a scientist; here it means any predisposition or act that stands between the committee and the fullest talent it can ultimately recommend. The two best guards against bias are thoughtful procedure and a good fix on the post and its preferred qualifications.

Words alone won't dispel the tenacity of academic discrimination on the basis of race or sex, religion and ethnic origin. You, of course, absolutely hope to avoid any such bias. Search committee after committee, though, avows commitment to affirmative action, trumpets it in ads, finds a relevant candidate or two to keep alive for a while, then nominates a slate of white males. "We couldn't find a woman, or Hispanic, we liked," the refrain goes.

Part of the rueful committee's problem may have been an earlier failure actively to search for talented women and minorities; or the failure may come at a later stage, in the interviewing. But just as often it comes at the present stage, that of screening, in which pools that start with many such candidates are stripped dry at successive stages. This "stripping" occurs without apparent bias of race or sex, but occur it does, often on *non-job-related* grounds that reflect deeper bias and habits of mind.

One such bias operates in the reading of resumes. We're all eager to spot the "rising star," the "real comer" — Ivy grad, Phi Bete, a Rhodes, Berkeley Ph.D. in physics or English, two books, a professorship, ready at 36 for your deanship. Whether you really *want* that "comer" — who has his own agendas and may be your "goner" before he's 39 — becomes moot; the profile is irresistible, whatever its (mis)match with your "preferred qualifications," which suddenly seem earnest and plodding. And, of course, this "comer" always seems to be a white male.

Keep reminding yourself: the candidate profile you developed earlier does have meaning (a lot of administration is earnest and plodding); the real talent you want for your post probably will *not* be "to the manor born." There are many good reasons why able people started out in colleges you never heard of, majored in nursing or sociology or teacher ed, display deviant "gaps" in their resumes (for community work, family, the Army), took thirteen years for their doctorate at a regional university, and are now working at a community college. Unless you're willing to look closely at what all candidates have actually *achieved* and can *do* in your post, screening by "prestige" factors becomes a talent loser.

No single screening factor is stronger (and works to lose the talent we're concerned with here) than bias by sector. It starts with negative inferences raised by baccalaureate origins: that "college I never heard of" turns out to be a women's college, or historically black, which the candidate attended for good reason and probably to good effect. "Why would we want somebody from a community college in Texas?", a screener snorts — and out goes a Hispanic candidate. "What's this person doing at Eastern State?", someone parries next — and a well prepared woman gets the axe.

The great expansion of higher education since 1960, and the new mobility and social patterns emergent since then, render obsolete many of the familiar ways of judging academic careers. It's no longer possible to equate choice or need to work in a "second line" institution with "second rate" personal abilities. Factors of social commitment, tight job markets, geographic preference, and dual careers have "scattered talent all over the place," as one headhunter told us. "It's no problem for me to find a top Hispanic," he continued, "they're serving in community colleges; 58% of all Hispanic students are there, and these educators have a commitment. My problem is getting committees in four-year colleges to look at them."

Kathryn Moore's research on administrative career patterns shows how strong the hold of "sectorism" remains. One might generalize from her work that the more insular the institution, the greater the felt need to find "one of our own;" the less secure, the greater the impulse to "hire up" for prestige. Special blinders seem to apply across the divides of the public/private and two-year/four-year sectors, blinders regrettable for the in-breeding they prompt, and for their negative impact on women and minorities (who tend to be concentrated in certain liberal arts and two-year colleges).

One more example, reflecting bias by *field*. "There are lots of talented, high-achieving women in academic administration today," an executive recruiter told us. "I find them in nursing schools, libraries, working as registrars or in extension programs, but you know what happens? They never make it beyond the second screening. My corporate clients are much better at this. They want a job done, they look at the abilities."

Another recruiter rejoined, "You don't even have to go to those fields. Right now the talent pool of qualified women, with all the right tickets punched for an academic deanship, is deeper than for males. Any college today that doesn't find women a third or more of its best candidates just hasn't been looking . . . or has a bad reputation."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A reasonable goal would be to reduce the pool to a size where it can then be read by the entire committee.

list, but they're too good to dismiss — the committee might want to reach down into the "hold" category after all. Committees often fear that to tell these candidates of their status will offend them, prompting some to withdraw whom it might be useful to call on later. So if they inquire about their status, temporize — or so the reasoning goes.

This is just duplicity masquerading as diplomacy. If a candidate's status, were it known, would cause withdrawal from the competition, all the more reason an inquiring candidate should have an honest answer about the status of the search. But I've told many a person "on hold" the true status of the search, and the typical reaction is to appreciate the information and remain in the race — but with more realistic expectations. Why should we forget as search committee members what we are like as candidates?

An interesting procedure at the present stage is a practice we learned about at the University of North Carolina-Asheville. There, as negotiated clearly in the initial charge, when the committee's pool reaches eight or ten the entire set of folders is read by the appointing officer. That officer then indicates to the committee whether the pool is acceptable (strong enough), and identifies any candidate the institution would refuse to appoint (upon which that person is dropped). The step saves committee time (investigating people who'd never be chosen), and can avoid later disputes between the committee and officer about the suitability of the pool and of candidates brought forward.

A final point: the search committee's screening actions of the past two weeks have no doubt been attended with a good deal of interest across campus. While the committee deliberates, a "second conversation" whirls candidates, as you advance toward a finalist group.

As guards against talent loss, steps of reminder about bias, a "census," and "add-backs" are recommended. These reinforce Chapter Four's point that the idea of a search committee is to *search* for talent.
outside its chambers, compounded

of rumor, hope, and apprehension about the process. The committee's pledge to itself of "no leaks, no private reporting" never is more important than now. This is an important moment, too, for a progress report to the campus from the chair.

Summing Up

The trick in screening is to winnow down an applicant pool to a manageable number of candidacies, and to do so without losing the best talent you worked to build into that pool.

For the winnowing, this chapter recommends taking things in steps, culling out first the most inappropriate applications, then proceeding at successive stages with greater formality and care, and at a key stage obtaining new information from candidates, as you advance toward a finalist group.

As guards against talent loss, steps of reminder about bias, a "census," and "add-backs" are recommended. These reinforce Chapter Four's point that the idea of a search committee is to *search* for talent.

The Interviews

Knowing and Courting Candidates

This longest of the *Handbook*'s chapters will help your search committee work through an important set of near-the-end questions: how do we learn more about our finalists, how many should we bring to campus, what happens in a visit, how can we make interviews effective, and what follows next? By chapter's end, the committee should have gathered all the information it needs about candidate qualifications and availability to proceed with recommendations to the appointing officer.

At this stage, with perhaps eight candidates on the table, the work of the committee takes on a new focus. The need is now *two*fold: to know these eight "better than their mother does," as a veteran advises, *and* to court them. The object is to find the person who best fits the job as you've described it, and to do so in a way that disposes him or her to respond favorably to an institutional offer.

This knowing-courting process can be tricky. A committee can be detective-like in its inquiries and drive a candidate away; or it can so defer to a candidate's reluctance that it learns too little.

Each of your eight candidates is in a sensitive position: up to now, everything has been confidential, nothing at risk. Now by letting you telephone references or by traveling for an interview, each risks exposure and scrutiny, and for what? One chance in eight? At least seven in your group won't be hired, as each knows; none wants to jeopardize or be undercut in an existing post.

Often at this point search committees hasten to arrange on-campus interviews. But wait: the bringing of eight people to campus puts too great a strain on the time, budget, and arrangement-making capabilities of too many parties. It necessarily means, too, that each visit may be too hasty for good learning on the part of candidates and the institution. Most importantly, it overestimates what you'll be able to learn through interviews: you can learn 80% of what you'll need to learn about each of the eight before any of them sets foot on campus, through good investigative techniques. Using those techniques you'll find three or four to invite to interview, then use interviews for the limited things they do best, which we'll describe as "matchmaking."

Initiating Inquiries

A cardinal rule at this point is that the committee must have a full agreement with each candidate about the who and what of committee inquiries.

From your standpoint, of course you'd like a green light to contact anybody with potential knowledge of the candidate's abilities, to ask any question on a presumption of full, declared candidacy. A committee that's done the right things up till now — provided good information aimed at motivating candidates, that's kept in touch, communicated personal caring, and been professional about its work — has a better chance of enjoying candidate confidence and of getting that green light.

Often, and for good reason, a candidate has to ask for limits: a sitting academic dean, for example, may be seriously undercut back home if committee members suddenly rain long-distance phone calls upon his or her faculty and staff. Even so, at this stage that dean must allow your committee some access to people familiar with his or her work, or withdraw.

Since neither party yet wants the latter alternative, a creative arrangement may be called for. For now, for example, perhaps a given faculty member and co-administrator might be called, plus two former colleagues who recently left the institution, maybe the dean of a neighboring college, people in the prospect's former institution, a professional-society contact, and so on. The committee might agree in turn to a certain discretion in talking about "the nominee." With good questioning techniques, even a few such calls can elicit information that may be adequate for now; but they *are* candidate-controlled, and any candidate so protected at this stage should realize that the committee will have to

The need is now twofold: to know these eight "better than their mother does," as a veteran advises, and to court them.

make less-restricted checks before any offer can be tendered.

Telephone Interviews

Assuming full permission, search professionals like at this stage to complete six to ten phone calls about each candidate (or enough for a full picture to emerge). They do want names of references supplied by the candidate ("three persons who know you best"), and they call those people, as a courtesy and in the interests of balanced reporting, but that's only a start: they'll call people they *think* should know the candidate, then the candidate's supervisor, staff, and colleagues, then do a blitz of former institutions, *then* pursue extra leads or a hunch.

Along the way, knowing that an active administrator cannot please everybody, executive recruiters aren't put off by any one person's "negative" comments; the search is for *patterns* of strength and limitation, for indications of "fit" between person and your task. Nor is every remark accorded equal weight: the inquirer evaluates "where the respondent is coming from," how credible and candid a source this is, how recently and well the respondent knew the candidate, and so on, all in the interests of a fair picture.

As people in personnel know, there's an art to telephone interviewing. The people you're calling may be busy, suspicious, or protective. Your need is to convince them that you're a bona fide caller with an organized, professional purpose, that you have a sincere interest in the candidate, and that their report matters. Explain your purpose, take time to chat and establish rapport, ask credible questions, and be a good listener. Don't interrupt or rush on; leave pause for volunteered remarks. Probe as necessary to get beyond strings of adjectives to specific incidents and how they were handled — reports of critical events add depth and concreteness to the larger picture you're trying to build.

What is it that you want to ask people in these telephone interviews? Two things: most importantly, about the knowledge, abilities, and traits you've identified as important to the post, and then also about significant gaps or missing elements in the candidate's materials. You learn about the former directly by asking about them, and through inference raised by prompted accounts of past performance (relevant past performance is your best predictor of future performance). As for "gaps," again, you learn by asking.

What you don't want to do is waste time asking respondents about what you already know — that the person is a good writer, for example, or has experience with collective bargaining. Ask instead for examples: how does the candidate behave at the bargaining table? What should I read that this candidate has written?

Note that telephone interviewers cannot ask informants questions about a candidate that it would be illegal to ask a candidate directly (about age, marital status, etc.). Keep the questions job-related.

For a search committee, the frequent bane of telephone interviewing is inconsistent information — too many members are making the calls, asking different questions, recording responses in varying ways and so on, so that it is difficult back in committee to have well-founded information that allows fair *comparison* of candidates (which is the task). Here are three strategies that committees have used to overcome this hurdle.

The first — strongly recommended — is use of an interview guide or protocol by callers. This assures that important, core matters are covered with all respondents, and provides for a more consistent, easy-to-use recording of respondent information. The best interviewers always use such a guide, but in a free, conversational way, so that the respondent never has a sense of simply being led through obligatory questions.

A second strategy — this one consumes member time — is to have two or more committee members conduct all interviews (or at least the more important ones), perhaps with one person doing the questions and another recording answers, then both agreeing at the end on the accuracy of a resulting record. The intent of the procedure is to reduce bias in the recording of responses and achieve a fuller record of the interview. The disadvantage is that with two members on the line it's harder to establish a trustful relationship with an informant that promotes candor.

Short of using two callers, you can reduce bias and achieve better information through attention to interviewer preparation, possibly via practice interviews done with other committee members present or by having the chair (who may be making no calls) sitting in on the first call or two placed by each committee member. Whatever option is followed, the issue is that of quality control and needs address by the committee.

Option three — this is what a search firm would do; it requires a talent, and trust — is to have *one* person do all or most of the telephone interviews. The advantages of this, especially if there is a person on hand with the time, knack, and confidence of the committee, are obvious: better overall questioning, consistency of information across candidates, and a great saving in committee-member time. The negatives are as easily imagined, not the least of which can be that it may take one person too long to complete a hundred or so 20-minute calls.

An alternative: have two or three members — people with the knack and time, who will agree to training and quality-control steps — do all

telephoning on the committee's behalf. Whatever the case, it's a good idea to assign calls about a given candidate to a single committee member, so that questions and leads can be followed up and a composite picture drawn.

Visiting with Candidates

In high-stakes searches — that for a provost, for example — it is not unusual for committee members in pairs or threes to visit candidates of high interest on their home campus. Here again a cardinal rule: do so only with the candidate's permission. Any visit must be done with discretion, with due sensitivity to the person's busy schedule and need for confidentiality. The purposes in such a visit may be multiple: to see the candidate in his or her own setting, to speak face-to-face with campus informants, to get a fuller picture of the candidate's ways of operating and accomplishments.

The biggest plus can be the signal a visit sends to the candidate of your sincere interest. Even if no more than a Friday, 4:30 pm appointment by one committee member is possible, a visit can pay big dividends in candidate disposition. (Search firms almost always take this step.)

David Riesman adds in a letter to us:

> In the combination of courting and discovering . . . it would seem advantageous, where feasible, to visit the candidates in their own homes or apartments. This protects confidentiality . . . [I] have visited homes of noted academic deans and been astonished to discover hardly any books (and this is a person who has been praised for brilliance), or except for a basketball hoop out back, hardly any sign of extra-academic interests. And then of course one can discover the contrary, the cultivated scientist with a harpsichord and personal choice in paintings.

An alternative to visiting, appropriate for a busy search committee on a slim budget, is to arrange a series of 20-30 minute audio-conferences between each candidate and the full committee, preferably all in a given day or afternoon. These are less an "interview" than a chance for all parties to get acquainted, to hear and respond to candidate questions about the institution and search, to learn things that are of concern to candidates, and — frankly — to "sell" the institution, the opportunity in the position, and the committee's process. Again, dividends lie ahead from such a step of personal contact taken now.

Other Inquiries

While the search committee proceeds by phone to gather substantive information about candidates, another track of inquiry should be going forward, the check of credentials. That is, someone — perhaps your personnel officer — needs to be checking the accuracy of claimed degrees, jobs, titles, and awards. Do not overlook this step. Resume faking or fraud turns up in 15 to 25% of all cases in the corporate world today and certainly occurs in academe (though less). We can cite cases in which a committee skipped this step, then had an appointment blow up in its face when a key discrepancy turned up later.

Telephone employment checks these days seldom yield substantive information about an ex-employee. Sometimes they can, though, especially when done by an experienced personnel officer who knows how to find and prompt the right person on the phone. One thing that officer will want to check is this: what is the employment status of the candidate right now? A certain number of candidates (though maybe none of your eight) are applicants because they're on their way out from wherever they are — for whatever reason, you better know.

Concurrently, have a trusted reference librarian dig into the publications listed on your candidates' resumes.

You can learn 80% of what you'll need to learn about each of the eight before any of them sets foot on campus.

Do the citations check out? What kinds of publications are they? Especially if they are professionally relevant to the post at stake, what views and quality of thought do they seem to display? (N.B.: we say "trusted" because of the danger here to confidentiality . . . if you're not sure, have a committee member do this step.)

One final inquiry needs now (or soon) to be put in motion: that is, for decanal positions or a provostship, frequently there is an institutional requirement that the appointee qualify for a faculty appointment (or you may want such an appointment to attract a candidate). In strict confidence, then, the chair needs to run candidate credentials by the relevant academic officers and committee, to learn in advance who may qualify or not for such an appointment. (Don't leave this step to the end, or the effect is to impose upon a department — and give it veto power over a chosen appointment.)

Invitations to Campus

When all or most of the phone calls have been completed, the personnel checks made, publications reviewed, and perhaps some visits made, the search committee is ready for an important choice: which among the eight shall be brought to campus for interview?

The question of how many finalists to bring to campus often vexes committees. A good starting presumption is the "rule of three" — that three candidates is an optimal number to bring to campus, given needs to get a comparative perspective on your best people, plus the practicalities of expense and time

The people you're calling may be busy, suspicious, or protective. Your need is to convince them that you're a bona fide caller.

raised by realizing the most from a visit and interviewing. What the presumption implies is that bringing just one person to campus can be a mistake (no comparative view), just as bringing all eight would be (too rushed and time-consuming). It implies that bringing three or four candidates, or in an exceptional case five, is about right for most searches, the determining factor being your judgment about the number of true stand-outs in the final pool.

Michael Bisesi of the University of Houston recommends scheduling more than three for a campus visit, because "one candidate will always drop out or be a dud." ACE's Judy Touchton recommends adding a fourth, too, your "high risk, high gain" candidate, the person with "second-level" credentials but unusual accomplishment. Wisconsin's Joseph Kauffman notes that sometimes a committee's charge or university regulation will specify the number of names to be brought forward to the appointing officer (five in one instance), so at least that number or more may have to be brought to campus.

A related consideration is this: bring no more candidates to campus than you are sure about. The big danger here when you combine in a visit your own in-depth interviewing with other parties' brief encounters — and you haven't even met the candidate before — is that you'll suddenly be learning things privately that disincline you to appoint while everyone else comes to be charmed. Then you have a political problem on your hands. That's why, in presidential search, committees or their consultants generally meet with candidates off campus before risking on-campus exposure. For lower-level searches, of course, that may not be possible. But the danger emphasizes again the importance of *pre*-visit investigation, and suggests not rushing to campus that fourth or fifth candidate about whom you have doubts.

The committee must now weigh its information about the eight, then decide. It does so by good preparation and extended discussion. The former requires that all search-committee members study ahead of time the full information (past and new) now on hand about each of the eight. Preparatory to discussion, a skilled chair might make up capsule summaries on all that is known about each of the eight.

The discussion itself should proceed with adequate time set aside and in a comfortable, private setting. At this high-stakes stage, all of the committee's prior work of trust-building and good communications is tapped to the full. In making its choices, the committee should keep as a reminder what it has been trying to do from the start: bring to campus a set of people of diverse backgrounds and talents sharing one characteristic, the qualifications to perform a task it has defined.

Once the committee selects its candidates for campus interviewing, the same considerations apply as at prior stages: let each of the eight know promptly where he or she stands. Among the five, say, who will *not* be among the finalist group, two or three may need to be told at this stage that they are no longer under consideration, while the remainder are told they are on hold.

It is also conceivable at this point that the search itself could be put on hold, because the finalist group just doesn't seem sufficiently capable or diverse. In this circumstance, the committee may want to loop back into its semi-finalist pool to identify two or three additional candidates for intensive investigation, or court anew one of its "prospects," or reopen the search to recruit two or three newcomers to the final group. Each of these steps at this stage represents a significant shift in course, and calls for the committee chair to confer with the appointing officer.

Whatever the case, the discussion moves forward here on the premise that the committee has identified three or four candidacies that together meet its expectations for a final interview group.

Campus Visits: The Context

In thinking through this next, crucial phase of its work, the committee might ponder what it knows about candidates at this point, and doesn't know, so that objectives may be laid for the visits.

By now, for example, the committee should have a quite strong sense that each of the interviewees has the knowledge and abilities to do the job as described, and a good sense of *how* each of them performs relevant work (you got this primarily from your telephone interviewing, basing your judgments chiefly on an analysis of candidates' recent performance of tasks relevant to your job). The answers to these questions should constitute a good 80% of what you'll base your final decision on.

Conversely, there's a residue of items that you have less information about. Until you talk personally and in depth with the candidate, and until he or she has had a chance to look at your post up close, it's hard to know whether that post truly will motivate the candidate and whether he or she will want to do the job as you've defined it. As of yet, you haven't much sense of the candidates' specific views on substantive issues relevant to the post (how do your academic-deanship candidates feel about that new general-education program just approved by the Faculty Senate?). And finally, not having seen these people in person, you're not sure about factors of candidate-institution "chemistry," about the candidates' personal traits, matters of style, acceptability to your col-

leagues, in short, whether the "match" or "fit" is such that the person will be effective in your institution.

The other side of the coin is that the candidates themselves have questions, both general (Is all this serious? What do these people want? Would this be a good move for me? What are the risks here?) and quite specific (What's the office budget like? The quality of staff I'll inherit? What's it like to work with this president?) Candidates, in short, are asking, "Do I want this job?"

Campus visits, then, inherently have a dual purpose: to promote two-way learning, and two-way attraction — match-making, if you will.

Campus Visits: Planning

The committee's task now is to plan the best use of on-campus time so that these purposes are met. To that end, it is helpful first to line up your objectives, allocate time, and set up a plan to realize them. One such plan might have the following elements:

1. To provide each candidate with a fair picture of the campus setting and role, and to recruit their high interest in the position, steps of information-giving and question-answering should be planned, as a first order of business.

2. To obtain a deeper sense of each candidate's motivation, work style, emotional make-up and maturity — to answer, Will this job prompt a best effort from the person along lines we want? — a longer, deeper interview with the committee and/or a personnel specialist should be scheduled.

3. To ascertain candidate views on important issues of substance — their philosophy, approach, or personal agenda — the committee and other parties will conduct structured interviews.

4. To get a feel for "fit" and acceptability, and to let the candidate learn about key people and constituencies he or she may be working with, serial interviews with a range of campus parties will be arranged.

5. To get a further reading on how candidates might perform relevant tasks in your setting, the committee might arrange situations in which each performs a task or two in public and is thereby judged.

We'll come back to each of these five elements in a moment; first a word about arrangement-making.

Each visit should be planned with the needs of the candidate in mind. To save time later, ask the candidate by phone what final dose of information about the locale, institution, and post might be sent ahead of time (e.g., an accreditation self-study and report). Ask if a travel advance would be helpful, about meal and housing preferences (use a hotel, not a committee-member's home), about questions they hope to have answered on the visit and people they'd like to see.

For senior posts, a two-day visit is almost always indicated, for the sake of your own needs and so that the candidate isn't confronted with a blizzard of rushed interviews and appointments with nary a chance to breathe, walk around, or think. Candidates will differ in their preferences for scheduling; you show regard by consulting with each in advance before putting together appointments for the two days.

When the candidate is on campus have a committee member on hand for transitions between appointments, to attend to creature comforts, answer questions and give feedback, to brief in advance and provide for introductions.

Scrambling Toward the End

The text's discussion of subtleties raised by questions of what number of candidates to bring to interview illustrates how complicated things can become toward the end of a search. Factors of situation, politics, and the necessities of recruitment ever intrude.

A *Handbook* like this can mislead a committee: its text tends to lay out an unfolding sequence of events, with numbers and times attached, always seeming to say, "first do this, then you do that." It's all very rational, even ideal. . . except that the world often won't hold still that way, especially at final stages of screening and interviewing. Now steps overlap, or are skipped, you backtrack, and sometimes you come to a halt.

Campus politics are a force that can disrupt a committee's best-laid schedule. Name it, and it's happened to searches: a trustee intrudes, the president balks, a petition appears, there's a press leak, then anger at a faculty meeting, the appointing officer quits, someone threatens to file a grievance or take you to court. Advice from afar becomes impossible, or too obvious: stay loose, keep communicating, watch for the unexpected, press ahead as you can.

Just as characteristically, there's the inherent unpredictability of personnel recruitment. Wisconsin's Joseph Kauffman has run searches at every level for three decades and written a book on presidential search. "The final stages of a search are hard to know in advance," he observes, "and harder still to impose a model on. However much work you put into building a pool, there's no telling what candidates you'll have left at this point and what their interest will be. You'll have problem candidacies, prospects, people who are eager about every step, others you have to accommodate to keep alive. You plan, but be ready to scramble."

From this point on, then, read this *Handbook* not like a cookbook, full of sequences of steps, but like a tourbook, pointing you toward sights, events, and paths to pursue.

Bring no more candidates to campus than you are sure about.

About Interviews

Most of a candidate's time on campus will be taken up with interviews of one sort or another. In the section after this, we'll discuss five different types of interviewing you might schedule (corresponding to the five objectives just stated). But first let us look at the device in general.

Books have been written about interviewing, based on the long experience of personnel officers and executive recruiters and on a smattering of social-science research. John Courtes, the author of one such book, *Cost-Effective Recruitment*, concludes a chapter on selection interviews with this rule: "Do not rely on interviews, even your own."

What the research finds about interviewing — especially about the one-hour group grilling so typical of collegiate search — should be pondered. Candidates are very aware that they confront a test and are on stage; people good at the process know how to present themselves, parry questions, hold the initiative, even fool you. Some people show well in interviews, others don't, and there's often little correlation between that performance and job performance.

Interviewers, meanwhile, tend toward three errors: they make up their minds about the candidate within the first five minutes, then spend the remaining 55 confirming that judgment, come what may; they systematically overrate any response or piece of information they construe as "negative" (the psychology is to find reasons to reject, not select); and they generalize from particulars to make global judgments about the overall qualifications of the candidate.

The short-term group interviews common to campus visits are especially vulnerable to these tendencies. A given group may never so much as touch upon the character of the job as you've defined it; cover big portions of the candidate's relevant prior experience; learn anything about his or her needs and motivations; nor have any inkling of a candidate's alcoholism. Chances are that the group's "interview" proceeded with a disconnected mix of vague, friendly, hostile, hypothetical, and special-pleading questions. Yet the group's vocal participants are likely to come back at your search committee with firm opinions about hiring (or not) your candidate.

The lessons: there are pitfalls inherent in group interviews; they *can* be reduced with apt coaching by your committee; even so, do not greatly rely on the device.

Your committee, as a group itself, can fall into the same traps. A special danger search committees tend toward is what Ruth Weintraub calls, "falling in love with the first available candidate." That is, the committee has worked so patiently up to now with abstract, once-removed information (resumes, reference notes, etc.) that the presence at last of a real candidate — who seems attractive, articulate, and interested in the job! — tends to make a committee forget all its stated criteria, earlier information, *and* other candidates in favor of this marvelous "bird in hand." Every search consultant has seen this phenomenon. They combat it (as you might) via self-reminders and gadfly remarks; by scheduling campus visits close to one another so there's less time for a groundswell to form; and by not bringing the apparently strongest candidate to campus first.

Ever so much more could be said about interviewing, but we'll stop here with a reminder and two recommendations. The reminder is that your committee is looking for a person with the knowledge, experience, abilities, and traits to perform a job you have carefully defined; you already know at least 80% of what's most important to that question, a point not to be lost track of in the final, more personal stages of campus visit.

A recommendation, given the value of the fuller literature on interviewing, is that a couple of committee members devote the better part of a day to reading up on the topic, so that they might then inform (through a briefing or hand-outs) the full committee and other groups on a more effective practice of the art. A reliable guide to the topic is Richard Fear's, *The Evaluation Interview*, though it's just a start on the human resources and personnel literature.

A final, important recommendation is that someone (maybe a committee member, or your personnel or affirmative-action officer) needs to brief the committee on the ramifications for interviewing of equal-employment opportunity guidelines. The good sense of these is that they'll keep your questioning on *job*-related tacks, and away from irrelevant questions put to women and minorities that you'd not ask of males or non-minorities. Helpful guidelines may be found in Chapter 21, "Interviewing and EEO - What You Can and Can't Ask", in *Hiring the Right Person for the Right Job*, by Dobrish. We highly recommend, *Seeing and Evaluating People*, by Geis, Carter, and Butler (see Further Reading).

Realizing Your Objectives

A section ago, the *Handbook* laid out five "planning objectives" you might entertain for bringing people to campus. These were: to heighten candidates' interest in the post; learn about their personal make-up; ascertain their views on substantive issues; get a sense of their "fit;" and to observe directly their ability to perform.

Placing these objectives alongside what's just been said about interviewing, we now detail how each of them — the building blocks for the schedule you arrange — might be realized.

1. The candidate's questions. In a spirit of using the visit to enhance interest in the post, a first objective

is to see that the candidate's issues and concerns surface and are addressed, *and* that the person learns fully your sense of the post and the opportunity you believe it presents.

Some of a candidate's questions can be dealt with more economically by the chair and the candidate alone, beforehand on the phone or on the way in from an airport. But a good idea for a first meeting between the candidate and full committee is to devote most of that up-front time to the *candidate's* questions. The message you thereby send is one of considerate regard. But self interest can also be served by this step: through it you can learn, early in the visit while there's still time to do something about them, what issues are at stake in the visit from the finalist's point of view.

Your committee can learn more than a little, too, simply by listening to the questions a candidate asks. Are they prepared? Skeptical? Incisive? Did your would-be dean ask only about the benefits package? Did your would-be comptroller evince no interest in seeing the institution's long-form audit? The committee might well stay behind after this session and ask, what questions did we hear? What do they tell us?

Other parts of the two days will be used to enhance candidate knowledge of the locale, institution, and post. A drive around town, a walking tour of the campus, time to visit with people who work in the office of the post, plus appointments with administrative peers, the appointing officer, and president would follow in due course. On many campuses, it's the practice in group interviews to reserve the final 15-20 minutes for questions asked by the candidate. The search committee's final meeting with the candidate might end that same way.

An important individual appointment the committee will schedule is that between the candidate and appointing officer. Allow breakfast and half the morning for it, or an entire evening. Each of the two parties has an important question that needs answer during the visit: can I work with this person?

The goal behind all these steps is clear: you want each candidate to leave with a full sense of your personal regard, of having had his or her questions answered, and knowing fully the opportunities in your post.

The bottom-line is this: you are trying to *recruit* a candidate's active interest in your post. Let that fact supercede any other. Unless and until the candidate wants the job, all the evaluation you do is irrelevant.

2. The candidate's make-up. Even with as much as it knows now about the candidate's abilities as they align with the post, the committee knows little yet about his or her professional motivations, preferred work style, emotional predispositions, and so on — all of which very much bears on the question, will this job prompt best effort from this candidate along lines we want? Is there the right mix of challenge, people, and situation here to engage this person's constructive energies?

In professional executive search, these questions come to be answered through the vehicle of an extended, focused interview with the candidate, not untypically lasting three, five, or even more hours (John Isaacson's interview with Robert Aaronson for the Port Authority airports job, which we mentioned in Chapter One, went six hours). In such an interview, many details of family history, schooling, situations from prior employment (these especially), leisure and reading patterns, and the like are evoked, from which key aspects of the person's make-up are inferred. In the course of a longer talk with a candidate it's possible as in no other setting to get a first-hand sense of important "intangibles" like self-concept, achievement-motivation, reaction to stress and criticism, risk-taking, sense of realism about shortcomings, ethical orientation, dispositions to lead, and sense of humor.

In describing such an interview, we're uncomfortably aware that all this begins to sound too psychological. Let's correct that by noting that most executive recruiters are not psychologists and that no college needs to psychoanalyze anybody before hiring a registrar. What your committee does want to note is that there is a broad arena of knowledge about candidates — their personal make-up and work orientation — that's quite important to performance in a post and that more should be known about.

A special danger search committees tend toward is "falling in love with the first available candidate."

How a committee chooses to inform itself about these matters will depend on its own sense of missing information, available time, committee expertise, and the post's importance. Here are alternatives.

One is for the committee itself to bone up on what the literature labels the "in-depth selection interview," then schedule a longer stretch of time — three hours, say — for a quiet discussion with the candidate about particulars of his or her background. Nothing psychological would be attempted, only a rendering in detail of key, job-relevant events in the person's life, from which the committee would then note patterns of preference and behavior. (One committee we learned about, at a Seven Sisters college, met alone for an entire day with each of its finalists, to reach the deeper level of understanding at issue here.)

A different tack might be to have a professional at executive search do this task for you, not necessarily on campus or at the time of visit. The committee would contract for these in-depth interviews and for a written report on each. In rare instances, you might find a good person for the task in your personnel office, on your industrial psychology faculty, or in a nearby corporate office. (The danger here: that by intruding a

You are trying to recruit a candidate's active interest in your post. Let that fact supercede any other. Unless and until the candidate wants the job, all the evaluation you do is irrelevant.

stranger into the process at this stage you'll unsettle a candidate's good will.)

3. Candidate views. In collegiate search, much more so than in corporate search (where this point tends to be passed over lightly), it can be quite important to learn the specific views of candidates on issues of substance. Ideas matter on a campus; you'd expect heads of major offices to come with a point of view if not a specific agenda, and you'll therefore organize interview time to learn about those views and agendas.

Here at last comes an appropriate task for the much-maligned (but inevitable) large-group interviews you'll schedule. These *can* work to elucidate candidate views, *if* they are so oriented and prepared for.

Robert Hahn, academic dean of Trinity College (Vt.), recommends that the search chair meet ahead of time with interview groups to pose the questions, "What are we trying to find out here? What job-related things do we hope to know about this candidate when this group's interview is concluded?" Hahn provides this example:

> A dozen or more faculty members are interviewing candidates for an academic deanship; you (and they) want to know the candidate's approach to general education. Assign one group member the direct question: what is your philosophy of general education? What do you think students should be able to know and do when they graduate? That questioner stays in charge of the discussion for twenty minutes or more, upon which a second takes over with a more specific, angled approach: Some faculty members here believe we should go back to a great books approach like Bennett recommends; what are the pros and cons of this approach in your view? Ask a third interviewer later still to try something even more particular: some of my colleagues and I want to pilot a team-taught course in modernism, as a model for a new interdisciplinary curriculum; we need released time and internal funding to do so; would you support us?
>
> The point is, with the least rehearsal and planned use of time, the group interview can produce an assessment of real depth of the candidate's approach to general education.

This same principle, Hahn notes — pre-arranged lines of substantive questioning — can also apply to one-on-one interviews arranged for candidates. Tell the interviewer the topic you want to know about, and arrange for the feedback.

It makes sense, too, to think ahead about group composition in relation to questions you want answered. In a visit by a candidate head librarian, for example, it's easy to imagine appropriate sets of questions that might be posed by successive interview groups of students, faculty members, library professionals, and the Senate's library committee. The key to getting the knowledge you want lies in your own planning, coaching of interviewers, and provisions for feedback. (A side benefit of your coaching is that it helps interviewers understand their role and its context within a larger, thoughtful process.)

A caution in all this is that no search committee would presume to know all the substantive issues at stake in a given vacancy. Therefore, don't over-prescribe for your interviewers; be ready to learn from their initiative. Nor should any interview look staged or work to put a candidate on the spot.

The committee's goal at the end of two days is to know what each candidate stands for and would likely bring as an agenda. Its question at that point becomes, how does the candidate's agenda match our own sense of what the institution and post require?

4. Candidate fit. Questions of "fit" are equally on your mind and the candidate's. Your basic question is this: how does the candidate's personal style augur for successful functioning on our campus?

In collegiate institutions, style and affect do matter for administrative effectiveness. In various institutions, administrators tend to be person-oriented academics or task-oriented workaholics; "tweedy" or "down home;" gregarious, managerial, religious, or outdoorsy. Each college, too, has its distinctive faculty and student cultures, mediated by a governance culture. The committee's goal is to find a person *reasonably* congruent with these cultures and who can work effectively within them.

The committee can expect lots of feedback about "fit," "style," and "chemistry" from campus interviewers. Often this will come through in the form of varying levels of *liking* for candidates (that's what people make up their minds about in the initial five minutes of an interview). Listen, of course, to what any campus interviewer has to say about the attractiveness of any candidate, but keep a grain of salt handy. You're not running a beauty contest; charm alone won't get a job done. That focus — on getting a job done — is one for the committee to stay attuned to even as others fall in love with this or that candidate. In fact, you are not looking for the "most liked" candidate; you are looking for abilities matched to a post, for success in which, as a threshold qualifier, a candidate must at least win the respect of relevant constituencies.

The same applies to the larger question of fit: the issue isn't, Who fits best? (i.e., "is most like us"), but,

Is this candidate sufficiently in tune with the culture here to garner support and be able to work effectively?

Some of the shrewdest judgments about candidate attitude and style, the committee should find, will come from administrators in parallel posts or who report to the same appointing officer. It's therefore a good idea for a committee searching for a divisional chair, for example, to schedule candidate interviews with other division chairs, or to compose interview groups of same-level administrators, fellow student services officers, or whatever the case may be.

As noted at the outset, the question of "fit" is two-sided, the other of which is the candidate's. He or she undoubtedly wants in the visit to get a sense of the key people and constituencies the post entails working with: What will my colleagues be like here? What are people expecting of the new appointee? Can I work with the appointing officer? A good candidate will be forthcoming about such agendas, which can be honored by the committee in the schedule it lays out and by allowing time at session ends for candidate questions.

A final observation about fit: in corporate search, executive recruiters emphasize to candidates at the visit stage that they are top-flite and fully qualified (as they are, or they wouldn't be invited), and that the chief remaining question is a fine and mutual one of fit. The approach lends a *positive* air to the visit (and can lessen later disappointment). Contrast this with the interview practices of some campuses, in which candidates are paraded, grilled, and ranked, and which produce "second choices" and "losers" bitter at the outcome.

5. Candidate performance. The best indicator of future performance is recent past performance in relevant tasks, as we've said earlier. The committee has attempted to learn of that performance through extensive telephone inquiries and by direct questioning of the candidate.

A reality, however, is that your information on the matter will always be second-hand, or candidate-supplied, and from another setting. Telling as that information can be, it still would be desirable to observe directly the performance of a candidate in a job-related situation in your own setting. What some committees attempt to arrange, then, are circumstances in which the candidate's knowledge, experience, and abilities come to be exercised in public view during the visit.

The idea can be illustrated with a pair of examples:

■ In hiring an editor recently, AAHE went through all the usual steps of advertising, screening, background checks, and interviewing, but then added a step: based on a job analysis, it identified five tasks it asked each finalist to do in an hour in the office — edit a page of raw text, choose appropriate photos from a contact sheet, critique a layout, re-do various headlines, and write a press release. The outcomes were revealing, the resulting appointment a success.

■ In faculty searches, it's the norm to request final candidates to display their talents, these to be judged by peers. A history department may ask each finalist to present and defend a paper; another department may ask candidates to lead a senior colloquium; potential music faculty maybe asked to conduct a master class; a candidate athletic coach might plan and conduct a practice.

The analogs for *administrative* search are not always so clear. There is little tradition of performance-assessment in administrative search to sanction what your committee might dream up. Certainly you don't want unthinkingly to put people you're courting on the spot. Whatever you do along these lines must be job-relevant, professionally appropriate, and done with candidate knowledge and concurrence. (For a useful debate about on-campus assessment of candidates, see articles in the May 1983 and April 1984 *AAHE Bulletin.)*

Keep a grain of salt handy. You're not running a beauty contest; charm alone won't get a job done.

Given these caveats, the following four examples are presented to stimulate your *own* thinking about the matter.

■ Have each candidate present a public, half-hour talk on a topic of his or her choice relevant to the post, then stand for questions. What relevant knowledge and experience seem on display? Is the candidate capable of sustained thought?

■ Have a candidate at the end of a longer, group-interview situation sum up what was covered and learned, what issues it left unresolved, and articulate an agenda for a follow-up meeting. Does the candidate evidence good listening, synthesizing, and planning skills?

■ Have a candidate, prepped by an existing background memo, participate in an administrative staff meeting that attempts to resolve an actual situation. What group-functioning and problem-solving abilities seem apparent?

■ Have a candidate deal with an issue critical to the post — e.g., the question of condom machines in the dorm that faces deans of students — in the presence of opposing groups. How does the candidate react to pressure? Deal with conflict?

As a technical matter, for the sake of consistent, more valid learning, any candidate performance should be assessed by the same judges (at least three) using job-relevant criteria; what the committee wants is their consensus judgment, in writing.

The best indicator of future performance is recent past performance in relevant tasks.

More generally, to make on-campus performance assessments work, full candidate cooperation is essential. You may want to propose the step ahead of time to each candidate as an option, looking later to the performance of those who exercised it and to the reasons for declining of those who didn't.

Interviews: In Sum

Let's recapitulate our learnings about interviews, adding tips and cautions along the way.

1. There are several types of interviews, not one. Know the power and limits of each, deploy forms of the device as fit your needs, rely heavily on no one interview for the judgments you're called upon to make.

2. All interviewers (including committee members) need constant reminders about bias and the dangers of stereotyping. Group interviews followed by discussion can be a plus here — groups tend to self-correct the biases of individual members.

3. The large-group interview is best at eliciting *information* from candidates, especially their views on substantive issues. Secondarily it can provide you with a sense of people's reaction to candidates, of a person's acceptability to key constituencies.

4. According to search pro Gordon Silcox, "The most productive interviews will be structured, planned in advance, and executed with discipline." It's hard to impose a formal interview protocol on a large, mixed group, though. But you can improve chances of getting the information you need by a bit of cooperative planning and preassignment of topics.

5. Brief (10 minute) pre-interview discussions between a committee member and interview group can help clarify purposes for best use of the scheduled time. Similarly, a debriefing session (20 minutes) immediately following can assure your capture of important findings and reactions from the group (put these in writing).

6. Failure to collect interviewer feedback is the bane of search committees. In addition to the step just mentioned, have every interviewer (solo or from a group) complete a one-page information/reaction sheet. Distribute these sheets in advance, in fact, so that people enter upon interviewing with your questions in mind.

7. Every interview group needs a chair to keep things on track: to protect time for prearranged questions and their follow-up; to prevent a candidate from rambling on; to nip in the bud special-pleading questions or worn-out lines of interrogation; and to assure the candidate's comfort and opportunity for questions.

8. During group questioning, if the candidate isn't doing 75-80% of the talking, something's wrong that a leader needs to right. The first skill of all interviewers is to *listen.*

9. Make sure that interview groups do the job you want, but not your job. That is, they should be collecting information and reactions as input to the committee, *not* voting on candidates.

10. Short, individual appointments eat up time and provide too little feedback to your committee. Restrict them to the appointing officer, perhaps the president, and to specific people the candidate requests to see.

11. The first purpose of any shorter, individual interview is to aid the candidate in knowing whether the post is of interest; only secondarily may it help assess a candidate. Recall: until the candidate wants the job, the assessment is irrelevant.

Last Questions

Near the conclusion of a campus visit, a private conversation between the committee chair and candidate usually takes place. In it, the chair ascertains what questions remain in the candidate's mind, whether the candidate is still interested in the post, and what obstacles he or she perceives to acceptance of it. "What would we have to do to make this position attractive to you?", the chair should ask.

This is the private moment, too, to ask the candidate about matters of physical and emotional health that impinge on abilities to perform the post, and to ask about special needs (e.g., help with moving expenses), family issues (such as spousal employment), matters of lifestyle (such as drinking habits) or restrictions (the candidate refuses to fly). (In some cases, by prior agreement, it may be left to the appointing officer to ask these last questions.)

If you and a candidate find you are highly interested in one another, now may be the time to end any earlier restrictions and obtain permission to call a complete set of references at the home institution (in rare instances of a touchy situation, this final step of inquiry may be delayed still longer, until the appointing officer chooses to pursue this candidacy in depth).

A personnel professional also would ask at this point, "If I called a dozen or two people at random from your campus or town, what negative information would I hear about you that I don't know now?" This is the infamous TORC question ("threat of reference check"), which usually leads a prudent candidate to volunteer additional information, which then is followed up. Indeed, the committee should already have come across "negatives" in its reports about the candidate; it makes sense and is fair to raise these now and have his or her response.

A brief exit interview with the appointing officer may also be in order, especially to cover matters of appointment and compensation beyond the purview of the committee.

Upon departing campus, it is usual for a candidate to feel exhausted and exposed. A day or two later, a

friendly call from the chair can acknowledge the feeling, provide a measure of positive feedback, check for questions, and convey a sense of when the candidate will hear next from the institution.

Summing Up

Once screening is done, the focus of a search changes, to knowing and courting candidates. The biggest part of that "knowing" takes place before candidates are brought to campus, via steps of telephone work, correspondence, credentials checks, visits, and other inquiries. "Courting" is accomplished via frequent, candid communication with candidates, and by honoring their needs to learn in a campus visit.

Committee management of candidate visits is stressed throughout this chapter. Committees are urged to be clear about a visit's purposes, employ different forms of interview to achieve them, educate interviewers about their role, and arrange carefully for the recording of feedback.

Following one last conversation between candidate and chair, the committee at last should have in hand the critical information it needs to proceed to its recommendations.

The Appointment

Bringing A New Person Aboard

At long last the committee is ready to realize a main point of its work: the recommendation of candidates to the appointing officer. That officer in turn will need to ponder, negotiate, and conclude an appointment. All parties then need to bring that appointee into the institution and post in ways that set him or her up for success.

The Recommendation

Once the interviewing and all background checks are completed, the search committee is almost ready for a final, longer meeting at which it will develop candidate recommendations for the appointing officer.

A remaining, important step is for each member to read (and read again) the cumulative records and notes assembled for each candidate. The step is often overlooked; "We've been reading about these people for weeks, we saw them on campus, let's get on with it," someone will say. But past notes get cold in the memory; the glow from a given interview can shadow judgment; most members weren't at every interview. Do, therefore, what a professional would do (and what you otherwise as a scholar would insist upon): mine those notes, learn them in depth and by heart. Your data, conscientiously gathered, contain the rich information you need for judgment.

This homework done, the committee will need to set aside a long afternoon in comfortable quarters, in a room private and free from interruption, there to work up its recommendations. The chair or a subcommittee, as an aid to discussion, might prepare in advance a list of "talking points" about each candidate, maybe even a first outline of a potential report. Don't stint on time; let each person have their full say; attempt to achieve consensus (nobody wants a minority report).

The form of the recommendation should not be at issue here; that matter was negotiated earlier with the appointing officer (Chapter Two). Whatever the form, a good committee report will discuss each candidate in full and in turn, outlining their apparent strengths and limitations, qualifications for the post as defined, and the committee's overall judgment about them as appointees.

In some institutions there is insistence that search committees recommend candidates in rank order. This is *not* recommended. For one, it too constrains the appointing officer's choice — and it is he or she, not the committee, who is accountable for the appointment and lives with the decision. Another problem with ranking is that it tends to force the evidence and distort a report — the committee spends too much time justifying the order and not enough on what each candidate presents as a choice. Not untypically, especially if you've built a strong pool, *all* of the finalists are "qualified," but each raises certain trade-offs and would take the job in different directions. Sometimes in a search one candidate emerges as a clear stand-out, or somebody fades as a choice, and you note that to the appointing officer; but again, more typically your analysis reveals a *range* of candidate abilities and directions for the appointment, and it is these (not a simple ranking) that the officer needs to confront.

Committee recommendations are at last drafted, checked and initialed by all members, then transmitted by the chair to the appointing officer. The transmittal should occur in a meeting between the full committee and the officer, which allows for wider questioning and discussion. In addition to its written report, the committee also turns over its complete file on each finalist.

A university in North Carolina employs an interesting practice relevant here. That is, the search committee transmits full comments to the appointing officer without any ranking of candidates; it vows (mostly to itself) to tell no other party ever about those recommendations. The officer in turn proceeds with a review of the report, with candidate contacts, and then to an appointment, and agrees never to tell anyone (including the committee) which candidate he or she contacted first, second, or otherwise, who might have been ruled out, or who may have said "no." The agreement protects the commit-

Do, therefore, what a professional would do (and what you otherwise as a scholar would insist upon): mine those notes, learn them in depth and by heart.

tee's and officer's independence and prerogative. The most important thing it does is thwart damaging gossip around campus: about who was recommended, whether the committee's choice was followed, or (most importantly) whether the appointee was "the first choice."

The Appointment

The appointing officer's options at this point are broad: to follow the committee recommendations, to investigate further or not at all, to choose from the list or reject it in favor of a reopened search. If the search has been done thoroughly and well, however, with good communication and agreed-upon standards from the start, an experienced executive will think carefully before straying from the committee's advice. Assuming its members are people of judgment (if not, why were they appointed?), the committee knows a dozen times better than the officer the ability and character of each candidate, about each's views and the response of constituents, and has weighed all available information. A good process should leave an appointing officer in a position, upon study and perhaps in consultation with the president, to initiate contact with a candidate almost immediately.

Parenthetically, making this point should clarify for a search committee that the appointing officer is a prime constituent for its work. If you want your recommendations followed, have a credible process and work from the start to convince that officer of its quality.

Upon receiving the search committee's recommendations, the officer should proceed to attempt an appointment without delay. The best candidates will wait only so long for a contact. As days slip by, they and people on campus begin to presume things: that the committee's recommendations were unsatisfactory, or that someone else has been made an offer, or that "it looks like our first choice said no."

Prior to initiating employment contacts, the appointing officer may want to tap his or her networks for any additional insight about a candidate (doing so with the person's knowledge). For higher-level appointments, officers have been known to hie themselves off to a candidate's campus (especially if this hasn't happened yet), to check impressions and talk at greater length (again, doing so with candidate permission). An officer may invite a lead candidate and family back to campus for a quieter round of talks, which, if events so indicate, may lead to an offer.

The usual query at this point is what has come to be known as a "Harvard offer": the candidate is asked, "If we were able to negotiate an understanding, and if I then made you an offer, would you accept?" The conditional phrasing protects both parties while signalling readiness to negotiate.

Prior to the offer and acceptance of a contract for employment, the appointing officer and candidate need to develop a set of understandings that encompasses at least the following:

- title;
- salary, fringe benefits, other remuneration;
- start and length of term;
- reporting and supervisory responsibilities;
- academic, social, or other expectations; and
- criteria for performance evaluation, including conditions of termination.

These matters are then reduced to writing in a tendered letter of appointment. Depending on circumstances, other matters may be agreed upon in that letter: personal or office budgets, provisions for leave, confirmation of a faculty appointment or tenure, office changes prior to the start of duties, moving or other allowances, matters of work conditions or office support, prerogatives as to personnel, and any special commitments made in the recruitment process. In negotiations for upper-level posts, the services of an attorney, financial advisor, or search consultant can often be helpful, especially when creative financial arrangements become necessary.

A few short comments about three of these matters:

- Many candidates will expect to realize at least a 15-20% gain in salary from a move entailing heightened responsibility.
- The bases for subsequent performance evaluation need to be agreed upon now and put in writing — including when they will be applied, by whom, looking at what evidence, and with what consequences.
- No appointment is so urgent that an institution should ever force a candidate to leave another post upon unprofessionally short notice (e.g., "Start here the week after next or we'll offer this to someone else").

Public Relations

When officer and candidate do reach an agreement, thoughts turn to an announcement, but before any public word leaks out there are private communications to accomplish. The successful candidate first needs a moment to resign gracefully at home. That done, the search committee should be informed promptly; so

should any remaining candidates (with a personal phone call, then a respectful letter); then people within the office of the search, institutional officers, the departing incumbent, and any remaining party of interest. Each should be asked to hold the information in confidence for a moment, so as not to diminish the formal announcement.

The announcement itself, beyond purposes of general publicity, should be calculated internally to a further objective: to contribute to positive expectancy about the appointment. That is, as is warranted, the announcing officer (often the president) communicates that a fine choice has been made, good fortune brings a talented, new person to campus, he/she looks forward to being here soon and working with us, as we anticipate the arrival. The point, again, is to prepare the way, not for a saviour but a good person we all want to succeed. (Because people care about how they are described in public, and a mistake or wrong emphasis can be damaging, pass that press release by the appointee for prior approval.)

At this point the formal work of the search committee is all but done. A good PR idea would be to boot up the computer one last time and write each of your original 200 applicants (and any other people who helped you specially) a letter telling of the outcome and thanking them for their interest and help. The committee chair and office assistant should collect all records and notes, put files in order, and check with the personnel officer as to their storage. The president and appointing officer should write a letter of gratitude to each member of the committee.

How Much Can a Committee Do?

A line near the end of this final chapter asks a search committee to "write each of your original. . . . applicants. . . . a letter telling of the outcome and thanking them for their interest and help." It's a classy step, and good PR — but no small task to accomplish.

Indeed, that step is but one among dozens of "good ideas" uncovered by the project and recorded in this *Handbook*. But as search consultant Nancy Archer-Martin observed wryly in reacting to a draft, "You ask much of a committee." The point is that cumulatively good ideas can overwhelm a committee, and make its task seem onerous if not impossible.

All this is true. But it's also as true that first-rate search is a big job, and that thoughtless short-cuts lead to big mistakes. For a hard-pressed search committee, what's the answer? Here are three perspectives.

■ **Help.** If you've read ahead this far before starting your search, you have a sense of how much work lies ahead (a lot). Ask how the task you now foresee squares with the time, help, and money at your disposal. Do they seem in reasonable balance?

If not, and casting back to options discussed in the opening two chapters, is there some arrangement for help that it's possible to make? Better search-office staffing? Relief for committee members from another responsibility? Part-time help from a presidential assistant? If not a search firm, can the part-time assistance of a consultant be arranged?

A lot is at stake; press the point with your appointing officer and president.

■ **Short-cuts.** These always will be necessary. For one, this *Handbook* is written with an upper-level search in mind (e.g., a deanship), while your search may be for a director or coordinator and have more-limited resources available to it. For another, people are busy, time presses, and no committee can pursue every possible good idea.

For your search, the value of the *Handbook* can be that its fuller store of ideas helps you make better choices about time- saving steps. Your own search planning will look to your situation and what's possible within it.

It might not be necessary in your search, for example, to invoke the highest levels of institutional planning (Chapter One), screening (Chapter Five), or visiting (Chapter Six); you may be able to skip finer steps of position advertisement (Chapter Four) or public relations (Chapter Seven); in certain cases, regulations presumed in the text may not apply; in others your institution's regulations may be so prescriptive that the process questions raised herein can be skipped.

In less bureaucratic situations of friendly regard, a committee might consider steps in which the appointing officer's cooperation helps achieve various tasks.

■ **Priorities.** Advisory board member James Heffernan of SUNY recommends that in planning a search and any "short-cuts," a committee keep its eye on what's most essential to success in its work. Among the dozen or so major, identifiable steps in a search, which are most crucial? At what points should there be no stinting?

Heffernan's "critical points" — they are ours, too — are three: up-front steps of position analysis (in Chapters One and Three); recruiting a pool (Chapter Four); and candidate investigation (Chapter Six).

Among the many dozens of smaller, "good idea" steps through these pages, Heffernan recommends "all those showing considerate regard for candidates." Amen to that.

This point should clarify for a search committee that the appointing officer is a prime constituent for its work.

Lastly, the chair, with comments from members, should draft a memo to the president with advice to next search committees, noting especially its own false steps or creative inventions not covered in this *Handbook* — and send a copy of that memo to AAHE (see the final page on how this can help).

Helping the Appointee Succeed

Corporate-personnel literature documents what you'd expect from common sense: that how a person enters an organization (the "induction") greatly colors his or her attitudes toward it, and people's attitude towards the newcomer. A person who starts with good briefing, proper introductions, and time to learn enters with positive attitudes all around.

What the literature also says is that most companies are best at orienting lower-level employees. Even in academe, we have people to orient students, secretaries, even TA's; but who is in charge of the induc-.ion of a new vice president or dean? The issue matters: more than one recent administrative appointment has gone up in smoke within the first two months.

In the interim between an appointment and the person's arrival, a number of things can be done to pave the way for a smooth entry, which the appointing officer or presidential designate should see to:

- A most important one may be for the appointing officer to attend to the cleaning up of any "messes" in the office of the post, or in offices reporting thereto. Don't use the fact of a new arrival to delay what should have been done earlier: a "bad apple" fired, a vendor changed, a space reassigned, etc. Consult the appointee, but don't leave someone else's dirty work as the incoming's first order of business.

- Even before the arrival, get your new person into the institutional communications loop. . . . this for purposes of informing, avoiding surprises, and building knowledge of how things operate.

- Invest in the person's readiness by funding exploratory visits to campus and for house-hunting, attendance at workshops reflecting new responsibilities, *and* by not intruding upon vacation time.

- Assign a regular contact person or mentor — maybe the appointing officer, or someone in the president's office — to help the newcomer stay in touch, prepare, and make transition arrangements.

A further idea is to allow time — a week to a month, depending on the position — for the person to arrive and ease into responsibilities. So often a new person comes aboard to be besieged from day one with dozens of small, urgently pressed matters — understandable if the office has been vacant a while, but intensely frustrating to a newcomer who may not even know yet how the phone system works. What he or she needs is a bit of early-arrival space and time — to read files, visit with people, learn the history, get on top of institutional systems and rules, and in general figure how to operate. A clear signal from the appointing officer to all campus parties is needed to create such an interlude. Of course it also requires that a new dean, for example, arrive mid-summer, not two days before the start of fall semester.

Once the appointee is on campus, there is one further, informal role that search-committee members may want to play, or at least offer to the person they helped choose: to be a short-term sounding board or "kitchen cabinet." Often a newcomer will value off-the-record advice from friends vested in his or her success — which problem to tackle first, what are the politics of such and so, how did my remarks go over? Any sessions of this type, of course, would be entirely confidential and at the call of the office-holder.

From a search-committee's standpoint, this final step of proffered help echoes and completes the charge issued in Chapter One: to help the institution find, appoint, and bring aboard a person who will *succeed.*

Further Reading

Most search committees will find this Handbook complete enough that no further reading will be necessary.

For those who want to hunt down particular articles in the periodic literature, you might (as we did) order up an ERIC search on the topic. Your college or university librarian can show you how. (There isn't that much there, you'll find.) One of the best bibliographies in print, accompanying a monograph on various topics in search, may be found in Richard Kaplowitz's, *Selecting College and University Personnel: The Quest and the Questions*, available for $10.00 from ASHE-ERIC, One Dupont Circle, Suite 630, Washington, D.C. 20036.

We came across several examples of committee handbooks put together by an institutional affirmative-action office. One of the best and most recent, though aimed primarily at faculty searches, is the *Handbook for Faculty Searches* (1987), available from the Office of Academic Affairs at Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210.

Three other publications are mentioned along the way in this Handbook that may be worth ordering. *Aiming High on a Small Budget: Executive Searches and the Nonprofit Sector*, while not specific to higher education in its advice, carries informative articles by personnel specialists and executive recruiters, and has good advice on when, why, and how to use a search firm. Order from the Independent Sector, 1828 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036; $5.00 prepaid.

For committees that want to bone up on interviewing, we recommend Richard A. Fear's, *The Evaluation Interview*, 3rd edition, McGraw-Hill (1984). This book more than likely will be in your library. Also useful: *Hiring the Right Person for the Right Job*, by Cecelia Dobrish (Franklin Watts, Inc., Danbury, CT. 1984).

For all purposes of screening, interviewing, and selection, there's a concise pamphlet we'd recommend for every committee member's reading: *Seeing and Evaluating People*, by Geis, Carter, and Butler, available for $2.00 from the University of Delaware's Office of Women's Affairs, Newark, DE 19716.

The American Association of University Professor's Committee T on College and University Government has issued a statement you may want to consult, "Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Administrators," published in AAUP's *Academe*, October 1981, pp.323-4.

Students of search await *Picking a College President*, due in 1988, by David Riesman and Judith B. McLaughlin, for literate, wise contemplation of many issues raised in this *Handbook*.

Acknowledgements

Extensive literature reviews were conducted in early stages of the preparation of the *Handbook*, but we soon saw that that would not be enough.

For a surer sense of the pitfalls, lore, and creativity of search, we had to talk with practitioners. A "call for advice" in the *AAHE Bulletin* led to dozens of responses from AAHE members and others, in the form of long letters and phone calls, campus documents, even "autopsy" reports on failed searches. We were then able to convene four, day-long meetings on key issues in the search process, and found tough-minded colleagues whose criticisms of an early draft are reflected on every page.

Important contributions were made by the project's Advisory Board, nine colleague-friends who set the early course, helped in countless ways through the year, then devoted many dozens of collective hours to our drafts.

The resulting *Handbook* is not, as noted in the Introduction, a committee document; responsibility for its contents rests solely with the authors. Even so, the stories and advice of the following people made this *Handbook* what it is.

Colleagues who sent letters, phoned, or met with us individually

Louis Albert, Director of Professional Services, AAHE; Robert Andringa, President, Creative Solutions Group; Mel Baker, Director and Professor of Engineering, The University of Tennessee at Cattanooga; Daniel Boggan, Acting Vice Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley; David Brown, Chancellor, University of North Carolina, Asheville; Doris Calloway, Provost, University of California, Berkeley; Richard Catalono, Associate Vice Chancellor, University of California; Annette Chappell, Dean, Towson State University; Robert G. Cox, Managing Director, A.T. Kearney, Inc.; Elizabeth Dickey, Dean for Academic Affairs, Planning, and Evaluation, The City University of New York; Marilou Eldred, Vice President for Administration, The College of St. Catherine; Mary Ellen El-Georr, Gordon Silcox, Larry Byrne, MSL International; Wayne S. Farley, Dean of Academic Services, Adams State College; Andrew T. Ford, Provost and Dean of the College, Allegheny College; Milton Greenberg, Provost, The American University; Patricia Hutchings, Director, AAHE Assessment Forum; M. Kelly Johansen, Coordinator of Graduate Counseling, Stanford University; Edward J. Kelly, Assistant to the President, State University of New York College at Brockport; Robert H. Koff, Dean, State University of New York at Albany; Ira W. Krinsky, Vice President/Partner, Korn/Ferry International; Clare A. MacDonald, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, University of Baltimore; Carol Marchick, Associate Dean for External Relations, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University; Sally Mahoney, Registrar and Associate Provost, Stanford University; A. William Olsen, Managing Director, Russell Reynolds Associates; Marietta Peskin, Associate Dean, Seton Hall University; Kent R. Peterson, Associate Vice President for Business Affairs, Stanford University; Lowell Price, Associate Provost, Stanford University; David A. Robbins, Chairman, Department of Mathematics, Trinity College (CT); William J. Shustowski, Vice President, The College of Saint Rose; Joy S. Smith, Dean of Student Life, Clemson University; G. Harry Stopp, Jr., Assistant Provost, Washburn University of Topeka; Ronald J. Stump, University of Virginia; Charles F. Sturtz, Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs, University of Maryland, College Park; William E. Vincent, President, Manchester Community College; Arnold Wengrow, Chairperson, Theatre Department, University of North Carolina, Asheville.

Participants at Group Meetings

ASHE Meeting, San Diego, California
February 16, 1987
Convened by the authors.

Shirley Clark, Professor, School of Education, University of Minnesota; Judith Gappa, Associate Provost, San Francisco State University; Judith Dozier Hackman, Director of Institutional Research, Yale University; Patricia Hyer, Assistant to the Vice President for Policy and Planning, University of Maryland Central Administration; Marvin Peterson, Professor of Higher Education, University of Michigan; Steven G. Olswang, Vice Provost, University of Washington; Jack Schuster, Professor, Education and Public Policy, Claremont Graduate School; Alan T. Seagren, Vice President for Administration, University of Nebraska Central Administration; Joan Stark, Director, National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and Learning, University of Michigan; William Toombs, Professor of Higher Education, The Pennsylvania State University.

AAHE National Conference on Higher Education, Chicago, Illinois
March 2, 1987
Convened by the authors.

Harry A. Blanton, Vice President, Park College; Vincent De Sanctis, Campus Executive Officer, Shenango Valley Campus, The Pennsylvania State University; Robert M. Diamond, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Syracuse University; Robert Hahn, Academic Dean, Trinity College (VT); Theodora J. Kalikow, Dean of Arts and Sciences, University of Northern Colorado; L. Jackson Newell, Dean of Liberal Education, University of Utah; Daniel Perlman, President, Suffolk University; Anne S. Pruitt, Associate Provost, The Ohio State University; Peter Seldin, Professor, School of Management, Pace University; Karl J. Wagner, Vice President for Student and Community Services, Macomb Community College.

The University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, March 9, 1987
Convened by James C. Renick, Assistant Dean of the Graduate School

Sister Jerome, Special Assistant, Saint Leo College; James Mau, Dean, College of Arts and Letters, Florida International University; Linda Lopez McAlister, Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor, Florida Board of Regents; Wallace A. Russell, Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of South Florida; Carol Surles, Associate Vice President, University of Central Florida; Sandra Wilson, Provost, Hillsborough Community College.

University of Houston, Houston, Texas, April 24, 1987
Convened by Michael Bisesi, Associate Dean, College of Business Administration

Elaine P. Adams, Vice President for Student Affairs, Prairie View A & M University; Herman Barlow, Vice President for University Affairs, Houston Baptist University; Dorothy Lynn Brooks, Coordinator of Institutional Planning, University of Texas at Arlington; Jonathan A. Crystal, Managing Director, Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc.; Roy Flores, Vice President for Business Affairs, Pan American University; Paul L. Moore, Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Houston; James H. Pickering, Dean, College of Humanities and Fine Arts, University of Houston.

Reviewers of the *Handbook* (in addition to the Advisory Board)

Nancy Archer-Martin
President and CEO, Educational Management Network

Jane Doyle Bromert
Director of Continuing Education, University of South Dakota

Harry Marmian
Consulting Associate, Peat Marwick Main and Company

Judith B. McLaughlin
Research Associate on Education and Sociology, Harvard University

Patricia A. Mullen
Director and University Equal Opportunity Officer, University of Minnesota

Judy Touchton
Assistant Director, Office of Women in Higher Education, American Council on Education

David Riesman
Henry Ford II Professor of Social Sciences Emeritus, Harvard University

Wendell Smith
Assistant to the President, Bucknell University

Ruth G. Weintraub
Senior Vice President, Academy for Educational Development

Christine Young
Senior Associate, Presidential Search Consultation Service, Association of Governing Boards

Finally, we express special gratitude to three people whose early enthusiasm and support allowed this project to go forward: Joseph Kauffman of the University of Wisconsin, Peggy Heim of TIAA-CREF, and Richard Johnson of the Exxon Education Foundation.

TJM, JFL

One Dupont Circle
Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/293-6440

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

October 1987

Board of Directors

Chair
Adele S. Simmons
Hampshire College

Chair-Elect
Reatha Clark King
Metropolitan State University

Vice Chair
K. Patricia Cross
Harvard Graduate School
of Education

Past Chair
Joseph F. Kauffman
University of Wisconsin
Madison

Estela M. Bensimon
Teachers College
Columbia University

Wayne C. Booth
The University of Chicago

Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr.
Maricopa Community Colleges

Donald L. Fruehling
McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Ellen V. Futter
Barnard College

Jerry G. Gaff
Hamline University

Zelda F. Gamson
University of Michigan

Joseph Katz
State University of New York
at Stony Brook

Dan M. Martin
John D. and Catherine T.
MacArthur Foundation

Alan Pifer
Southport Institute for
Policy Analysis

W. Ann Reynolds
The California State
University

Piedad F. Robertson
Miami-Dade Community
College

Donna L. Shavlik
American Council on Education

D. Wayne Silby
Calvert Social Investment Fund

P. Michael Timpane
Teachers College
Columbia University

President
Russell Edgerton

Dear Colleague:

This Handbook is a product of the voluntary contributions of many dozens of faculty members and administrators. Its knowledge base rests primarily on their accounts of search-committee service, gathered in academic year 1986-87 by correspondence, group and individual meetings, and telephone interviews.

As time passes, the material in these pages will require revision. No doubt this first edition already exhibits errors and omissions; by and by, new findings from committee experience, research, and regulatory practice will emerge, too.

For a second, revised edition of this Handbook, then, the project will be most eager to have your report of any experience or insight gained from search service or use of this Handbook. Your letter, memo, or report will be acknowledged. (Do indicate on it any restrictions of confidentiality pertaining to its use or quotation.) Address it to:

Search Committees Project
American Association for Higher Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 600
Washington, D. C. 20036

Hope your search went well! Now tell us about it, so together we can improve things for future committees.

Gratefully,

Theodore J. Marchese

Theodore J. Marchese
Vice President

FIRST PRAISE FOR...

The Search Committee

HANDBOOK

"Finally, higher education has an intelligent guide for recruiting administrators—an activity often taken for granted and not always thoughtfully carried out."

Paul A. Elsner
Maricopa Community College District

"Remarkably sound...I wish this *Handbook* had come out years ago. I plan to make it required reading for all searches."

Martha E. Church
Hood College

"For years, search committees hit the road without a roadmap, or climbed to 30,000′ without a flight checklist. Now, thanks to this wise, thorough, readable *Handbook*, there will be far fewer treks in the wilderness or crash landings."

Robert G. Cox
A.T. Kearney, Inc.

"The book we've needed...the Turabian of search."

James M. Heffernan
State University of New York